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Orbis

A Journal of World Affairs
Volume 40, Number 3, Summer 1996

David R. Gress on Western Civilization

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BEYOND THE UNIPOLAR MOMENT

War in the South China Sea Imagined
Felix K. Chang

Emergent Signs of Moscow's Ambition
Richard F. Staar

A Sober Survey of the Islamic World
Ira M. Lapidus

America's Place among the Great Powers
Larry Diamond

The Indonesian Giant at Fifty
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A Debate on the Japanese "Miracle"
Chalmers Johnson / Eugene Dattel / Henny Sender
With a Reply by David L. Asher

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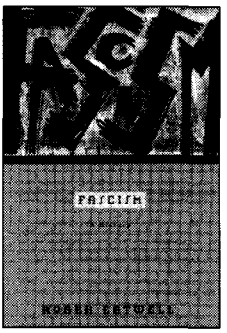

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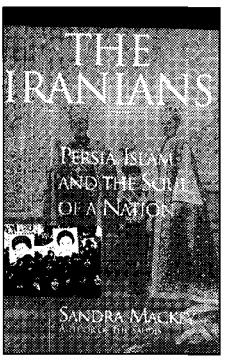

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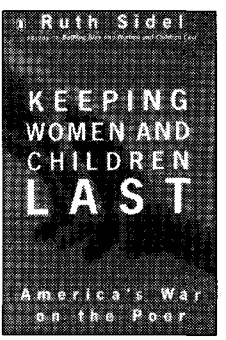

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Editor's Column

David L. Asher's article in the Spring issue of *Orbis* lit a fire. His controversial claim that Japan's economy is in a state of endemic crisis, thanks to its bureaucrats' stubborn commitment to an inflated asset "bubble" strategy, reportedly bounced all over the Internet even before publication. Regrettably, Chalmers Johnson, the renowned Japanologist and leader of the "revisionist" school, has resigned from our Board of Editors in protest of an essay he deems so wrongheaded (see *Correspondence*). What, Johnson asked me, is the function of our Board of Editors beyond that of lending distinguished names to the masthead? Good question. First, we hope that board members will occasionally contribute to *Orbis*. Secondly, we ask them to steer good authors and articles our way. Thirdly, we seek their advice when we are unsure of the quality (as opposed to the viewpoint) of a manuscript in their field. Lastly, we always invite our board to comment critically at any time on any aspect of this journal.

In These Pages

How brief was our ascendancy over a "unipolar" world! Just five years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the international system, if not yet multipolar, seems to lack a pole at all. Regional powers are increasingly determined to defy American wishes, U.S. power continues to erode, and Americans themselves evince growing discomfort with their government's recent interventions. In these pages, we conduct you on an expertly guided tour of regions that are, or would like to be, contestants for global influence in the twenty-first century.

Media coverage of the March 1996 crisis in which Beijing tried to disrupt the presidential election of the Republic of China on Taiwan left one question unanswered: just what are the military capabilities of the People's Republic of China? Is it a burgeoning superpower in need of "containment," a regional power with naval and air forces sufficient to impose its will on its neighbors, or just a paper tiger? Felix K. Chang, an assiduous young student of military technology, takes on that mystery in a three-part series on China's military reach. In this issue, Chang examines the South China Sea, where Beijing has laid claim to the oil-rich Spratly Islands and warned that it may resort to force. Chang's technical but readable analysis passed muster with an expert privy to classified information, and we look forward to his coming installments on PRC capabilities in the Taiwan Straits and the steppes of Central Asia.

Which brings us to Russia, another restless giant. By the time this journal appears, Russians, too, will

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have held a presidential election with far-reaching consequences for U.S. foreign and defense policy. Richard F. Staar, who has monitored the Kremlin's threat for decades, tells us that Russia will become more assertive no matter who wins the election: just look at its own internal planning.

A third potential adversary in any new "cold war" is the aroused Islamic world. Samuel Huntington has seen in political Islam the potential to become a civilizational rival to the West, as it was as recently as four centuries ago, and experts like Daniel Pipes have named radical Islam the most threatening force in the world today. But Ira M. Lapidus, the eminent Berkeley historian, thinks otherwise, stressing the deep divergences and cleavages in that civilization in search of itself.

Lastly, Larry Diamond critiques one of the most important current books on foreign policy—the late Eric A. Nordlinger's call for a neoliberal isolationism—and insists that the United States must stay engaged in the world, be it "unipolar" or not.

Another theme introduced in this issue is the role of religion in world affairs. New FPRI senior fellow David R. Gress shares insights from his forthcoming book on the idea of Western civilization. Is the West defined by its religious past, its secular present, or both? And why, asks Gress, does it matter?

Night Thoughts of an I.R. Professor

Latin America—every foreign-policy editor fears it is a guaranteed "MEGO" (my eyes glaze over). Henry Kissinger puckishly described South America as a dagger pointed at the heart of Antarctica. And the whole hemisphere south of the Rio Grande, frankly, engages the attention of *norteamericanos* only when communist rebels, tinpot dictators, or Colombian drug lords make nuisances of themselves. How many times have we heard that Brazil or Venezuela was about to "take off," only to ask a few years later, "Whatever became of the Brazilian boom?" Even the hopes and fears raised by NAFTA proved as inflated as the peso, so that in 1996 the goal of most Yankees is not to look south, but to stop Mexicans, Haitians, and others from coming north. It calls to mind George Kennan's lugubrious mood after his tour of Latin America in 1950. He was appalled by the extremes of wealth and poverty, the "Alice in Wonderland" flight from reality, the dearth of initiative, and the dead hand of church and state:

> It seems to me unlikely that there could be any other region of the earth in which nature and human behavior could have combined to produce a more unhappy and hopeless background for the conduct of human life than in Latin America. . . . [Hence], the shadow of a tremendous helplessness and impotence falls today over most of the Latin American world. . . . These bitter realities are ones which people cannot face fully and constantly. Human nature, with its insistence that life must go on, represses the consciousness of these things, turns away from them in healthy revulsion, and seeks to balance them out by overcompensation. Thus the inordinate splendor and pretense of the Latin American cities can be no

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> other than an attempt to overcompensate for the wretchedness and squalor of the hinterlands from which they spring. And in the realm of individual personality this subconscious recognition of the failure of group effort finds its expression in an exaggerated self-centeredness and egotism—in a pathetic urge to create the illusion of desperate courage, supreme cleverness, and a limitless virility where the more constructive virtues are conspicuously lacking.[1]

In a Mexico City hotel room made tawdry by weathered Spanish antiques, Kennan writes, he lay hot and sleepless "while mosquitoes buzzed around my pillow, and outside a fountain tinkled softly in the patio and a fitful night breeze searched aimlessly back and forth among the cloisters, like a ghost, murmuring, as it seemed to me, 'Lost, lost, lost.'"[2]

And yet, by 1950 the U.S.–Latin American embrace had already fertilized both continents with the genes of the other, though two generations would have to mature before the mix was apparent. As an eloquent historian of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy put it:

> FDR had a woman, Lucy Page Mercer: warm, understanding, exhilarating, sensuous, and at least for a time his mistress. . . . He also had a wife, high-minded and compassionate if not passionate (at least not with him), a wife who was serious about humanitarian reforms to the point of being a dour nag. . . . Metaphorically, Roosevelt's private love life had a counterpart in his public life. He had a trans-Atlantic wife shaped by the same influences that had molded his life; yet for some reason he was estranged from her. Along the way, he acquired a Latin mistress, shaped in altogether a different mold.[3]

The Roosevelt-era "affair" ended with our entry into World War II, and for twenty years thereafter the United States concentrated on Europe. Even the pale hope that Uncle Sam would extend a Marshall Plan to Latin America died at the Bogotá conference of 1948. (Most Latin American governments quietly cheered: they feared the social consequences of Yankee dollars as much as Stalin did in Eastern Europe.)

Then, in the unlooked-for way that things happen in love and war, there appeared a villain who, though it was hardly his intention to do so, pushed Yankees and Latins together again. The ultimate irony of Fidel Castro's tenure as bearded beast of the Caribbean may be that, thanks to him, U.S. and Hispanic leaders alike awoke from complacency and committed themselves to change. The story of Latin America's tempestuous, fractious transformation is still far from over. But after all the coups, oil-price shocks, debt crises and bailouts, the Falklands War, botched aid programs, revolutions, and counter-revolutions, the trend lines are clear and startling. Democracy, if unstable, is almost everywhere in place—in Mark Falcoff's words, even Mexico

[1] George F. Kennan, *Memoirs (1925–1950)* (1967; New York: Bantam, 1969), pp. 507–9.

[2] Ibid., p. 503.

[3] Fredrick B. Pike, *FDR's Good Neighbor Policy: Sixty Years of Generally Gentle Chaos* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), p. 274.

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ceases to be Mexico. And so widespread is privatization that Elliott Abrams believes Latin America may have escaped the cloying jungle of statism once and for all. North Americans, in turn, are shedding the stereotypes voiced by Kennan by dint of the Evangelicalism, Chilean-style capitalism, and political liberalism sweeping Latin America, as well as the fading of anti-Catholicism in the United States and the Latinization of the American population. One may even speak of a certain convergence between the lands colonized by Britons and those colonized by Iberians.

I would not load up on Latin American mutual funds just yet. But neither is Latin America the timeless, changeless, hopeless, helpless culture we so recently scorned. Perhaps that is so simply because Yanks and Hispanics alike quit brooding on Latin American pathology and acted. For if "the unexamined life is not worth living, it may also be true that, as FDR seemed to believe, the overexamined life adds up to a narcissistic waste of time."[4] And perhaps that is the truth Kennan could not quite put his finger on, in that sultry hotel room in Mexico City.

The place of religion in world affairs is a huge, unexplored topic. Is that because it is frightening to the modern, secular mind and resistant to social science? Or because we are comfortable with the myths we inherited from the Enlightenment? One of those myths is that religion breeds fanaticism, hence the genius of the West in separating religion and politics after the Wars of the Reformation. Nothing could be more wrongheaded. Those "religious wars" were as political as religious wars are today. The Catholic Habsburgs and Protestant Swedes, Anglicans, and Dutch may have used sectarianism as an excuse and tool for statecraft, but their goals were dominion. The Spanish crown, not the church, set up the Inquisition because it considered confession a sign of *political* loyalty. The factions in the French civil wars divided along Catholic and Huguenot lines, but the stake was the throne of France, and Henri de Bourbon gladly converted to Rome in exchange for the crown. To the German princes of the Holy Roman Empire, Lutheranism meant independence from the emperor and the Vatican. Richelieu, a cardinal of the Church, was pleased to ally with Protestants and Muslim Turks if that made life miserable for his Habsburg rivals. And who today imagines that the Irish Republican Army bombs London for religious motives, or that Hamas hopes to convert Jews to Islam, or that Serbs wage a Christian jihad on Bosnian Muslims? No, these are wars for turf, pure and simple, however much religious zeal may steel the combatants to risk their lives.

Nor is there virtue in the fact that Europe's great powers removed religion from politics after 1648. On the contrary, the wars of the secular era grew ever more total, ideological, and vicious. Wallenstein, the Catholic scourge of Germany during the Thirty Years' War, and Cromwell would recoil in horror at the way we twentieth-century folks wage war.

Can one therefore argue the opposite case: that religion breeds

[4] Ibid., p. 353.

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tolerance and restraint? Obviously not, either because organized religion remains the servant, not master, of states in much of the world, *or* because it has grown so weak as to influence nothing at all. What is more, any endangered country that refrained from self-defense out of religious scruples would soon cease to exist. The only sure way religion functions as an autonomous variable is through the consciences of leaders. But the impact of faith on the ends and means of leaders varies widely. Consider Woodrow Wilson, Jimmy Carter, William E. Gladstone, Tsar Nicholas II, Tojo Hideki, Charles de Gaulle, Anwar Sadat, and Lech Walesa. Tojo and Nicholas elected, *after prayerful consideration*, to launch suicidal wars, while the moralizing of Gladstone, Wilson, and Carter often achieved the opposite of what they intended. De Gaulle and the others, by contrast, found in their faith the courage to triumph against apparently impossible odds.

Faith, it seems, can move mountains or bring them down upon one's head. Is that just because the political judgment of some believers is sounder than that of others (Bismarck was said to believe conveniently in a God who never disagreed with him), or because the judgment of statesmen is shaped by the sort of religion they espouse? Is there something in Lutheranism that breeds Bismarcks, something in Orthodoxy that fashions mad tsars, something in Anglicanism that makes Roosevelts, and something in Baptism that makes Carters? But Harry Truman was a Baptist, too, and he was tough as nails. . . .

We approach the millennium. Stand by for self-appointed Jeremiahs to appear in parks and commuter stations, and to prophesy in books and on talk shows of the real "end of history." Is there anything to it? Well, according to extreme environmentalists, the answer is yes: all or most of humanity could be wiped out by (a) "nuclear winter" following a full-scale war; (b) global warming through the "greenhouse effect"; (c) a "new ice age" as pollution blocks the rays of the sun; (d) AIDS, Ebola, or some other obscure African virus; (e) cancers resulting from CFC-induced holes in the ozone layer; (f) a dearth of oxygen from destruction of tropical rain forests; or, most recently, (g) artificial chemicals that mimic hormones and render humanity sterile. (Coincidentally, mystery writer P.D. James has developed that theme in a novel: all of a sudden, no more babies.)

In retrospect, the progression from "man as God" preached by communists and technocrats to "man as devil/destructor" preached by the environmentalists was wholly predictable. Happily, if the authors reviewed herein by Patrick Clawson are right, the odds that these Judgment Days will occur are less than those of our race being extinguished, like the dinosaurs, by a rogue asteroid. But anyone inclined to say, "What, me worry?" should consider the familiar facts of demography. As recently as 7,000 years ago, only about five million people inhabited the earth. Agriculture and civilization boosted that figure to about 190 million, but that process took 5,000 years, and as late as 1700 A.D. the earth was supporting a mere 610 million people. Today our numbers approach 6 billion. Hence, 90 percent of the population growth

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has occurred in just 6 percent of recorded history. Now, that in itself is not scary. The Malthusian nightmare has never come true, and every example proves that free economic and technological progress yields more plentiful food, a cleaner environment, and a tendency toward smaller families. No, the scary part is that the centuries of the population explosion have been exceedingly mild in terms of *climate.* Thus, it would not require an Ice Age, but only a drop of two or three degrees in the average global temperature to reduce the growing season in temperate climes and take thousands of square miles of Russia and Canada out of cultivation entirely. Millions of people could starve and consumption of fuels would soar, sparking who knows what mass migrations and wars for survival. It has been said that the Japanese, a crowded nation confined to an earthquake belt of small, mountainous islands, live constantly on the edge of hysteria. Mayhap we all live on the edge and just do not know it. Which is why this Illinois boy tries to remember to give thanks, each fall, after the harvest is in.

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Beyond the Unipolar Moment

Beijing's Reach in the South China Sea

by Felix K. Chang

Since the early 1980s, China has consistently sought to accelerate the modernization of its conventional forces. The essence of that new policy was captured by Chinese strategists in a "set of eight Chinese characters: *zongti fanqwei, zhongdian fazhan* (strengthen overall national power for defending security, emphasize the main points of defense science and technology)."[1] The policy was designed to give Chinese forces the strategic framework to "coordinate with each other in combat, react quickly, counter electronic surveillance, ensure logistical supply, and survive in the field."[2] By relying on the wealth generated from the country's economic expansion to acquire foreign military equipment and technology, particularly from Russia, China's modernization program has benefited significantly. Now, as Chinese leaders become more assertive in East Asia, China's neighbors naturally monitor with growing unease the Chinese military, increasingly geared for power-projection.[3]

Although Taiwan has so far been this year's focus of concern, Chinese military planners have not abandoned their aim of asserting sovereignty over the Spratly (Nansha) Islands in the South China Sea. China and several Southeast Asian countries—including Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Brunei—vie for control over these islands and the rights to the sea and seabed

[1] John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *China's Strategic Seapower: The Politics of Force Modernization in the Nuclear Age* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994), p. 218.

[2] "The Beginning of a New Phase for the Modern Construction of the PLA," *Renmin Ribao,* July 31, 1984, quoted in Lewis and Xue, *China's Strategic Seapower,* pp. 213–14.

[3] See Nayan Chanda, "Fear of the Dragon," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (hereafter *FEER*), Apr. 13, 1995, pp. 24–28; Nayan Chanda, Rigoberto Tiglao, and John McBeth, "Territorial Imperative," *FEER,* Feb. 23, 1995, pp. 14–16; Patrick E. Tyler, "China Revamps Forces With Eye to Sea Claims," *New York Times,* Jan. 2, 1995; Denny Roy, "Hegemon on the Horizon?" *International Security,* Summer 1994, pp. 149–68; Michael G. Gallagher, "China's Illusory Threat to the South China Sea," *International Security,* Summer 1994, pp. 169–94; and Nicholas D. Kristof, "The Rise of China," *Foreign Affairs,* Nov./Dec. 1993, pp. 59–74.

Felix K. Chang is a graduate student at the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University. He has served in the U.S. Department of State in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, in the Bureau of Consular Affairs, and on the Rwanda, Somalia, and Haiti task forces.

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resources around them. (See Maps 1 and 2.) China's position is clear. The Spratly Islands "'are within Chinese territory and other countries are definitely not allowed to invade and occupy them,'" and the National People's Congress passed a maritime law in February 1992 affirming China's "indisputable sovereignty" over the islands.[4] Those countries that defy China in such situations as the South China Sea will be ejected in a conflict that, the Chinese say, would be "characterized by sudden outbreaks, a quick conclusion, a broad theater of war, long distances from the land, and much greater requirements for the capabilities to stage combined operations by the three armed services."[5] Even countries that are not directly involved in the Spratly Islands dispute, such as Indonesia and Singapore, have become concerned with China's rhetoric.

While observers of Southeast Asia have thoroughly examined the economic, political, and legal aspects of this dispute, few have made a holistic attempt to determine whether China's forces can make good their government's threats. It is to these considerations that we now turn.

The Correlation of Forces

Assuming that China's political objective in the South China Sea is the Spratly Islands and the natural resources that may surround them, the military objective for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is evident—to secure the disputed islands and gain control over all means of access to the area. With the abiding memory of the Chinese navy's successful armed clash with Vietnamese forces on March 14, 1988, and the Chinese navy's clear superiority in naval tonnage, it is easy to imagine Chinese warships surging en masse into the South China Sea and overwhelming their adversaries in decisive battle. That image is further reinforced by the fact that "since the late 1980s, [Chinese] naval planners have called for changing from a coastal defense *(jinhai fangyu)* strategy to an offshore defense *(jinyang fangyu)* strategy . . . [extending] the defense perimeter to between 200 nm and 400 nm from the coast, and even more in the case of the South China Sea islands."[6]

Moreover, many Chinese warships are now outfitted with ship-launched cruise missiles like the HY-2 (C-201), a derivative of the Soviet SS-N-2a Styx, that has a range of 80–95 km. Most newer Chinese naval ships field the more accurate JY-1 (C-801), which can strike targets out to a distance of 32–40 km. Improving on the JY-1, the JY-2, which will soon be operational, incorporates

[4] See John Garver, "China's Push Through the South China Sea: The Interaction of Bureaucratic and National Interests," *The China Quarterly,* Dec. 1992, p. 1019. See also Bonnie S. Glaser, "China's Security Perceptions," *Asian Survey,* Mar. 1993, pp. 264–67.

[5] Jia Wenxian et al., "On the Specific Laws Concerning Future Local Conflicts That Will Involve Our Country," *Guofan Dazue Xuebao,* No. 11, 1987, p. 9, quoted in Lewis and Xue, *China's Strategic Seapower,* p. 226.

[6] Ibid., p. 229.

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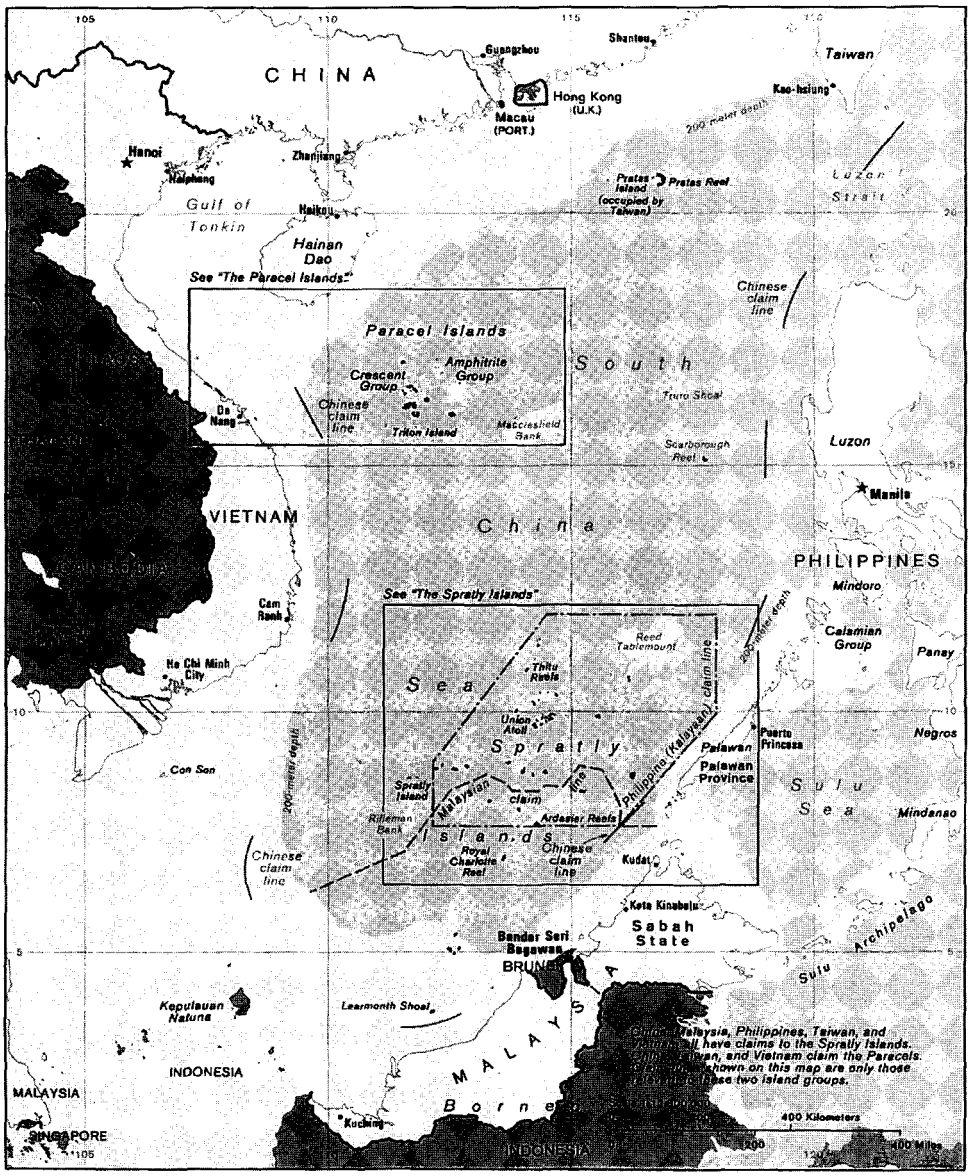
Map 1
South China Sea



Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C.

a turbojet engine, an active homing radar, and an electronic counter-countermeasures (ECCM) system. In naval surface warfare, these missiles certainly would give Chinese forces a decided advantage over even the most powerful guns currently deployed in Southeast Asian navies. Lastly, the growing number of Chinese warships capable of replenishment at sea suggests that the PLA

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Navy (PLAN) will soon be able to conduct the sustained large-scale operations necessary for a campaign in the South China Sea.[7]

Unfortunately for China, its potential adversaries in the Spratlys dispute, particularly Malaysia and Singapore, have matched or even surpassed China in several technical areas with weapons like the American-built anti-ship RGM-84D Harpoon and the French-built MM 38 Exocet. The Harpoon, with a range approaching 125 km, outdistances even the Chinese HY-2. Combined with advanced fire-control and guidance systems aboard their warships, Malaysian and Singaporean Harpoons and Exocets are much more lethal than their Chinese counterparts.

Singapore's navy, arguably one of the most technologically advanced in the region, can now deploy six Fearless-class and six Sea Wolf–class guided-missile patrol boats, as well as six Victory-class corvettes, all armed with Harpoons. Some are also equipped with Israeli-built Gabriel II anti-ship missiles, French-built Mistral infrared homing anti-air missiles, the Sadral point-defense system, and modern radar and communications systems. Moreover, Singapore commissioned four Swedish-designed Bedok-class (Landsort) mine hunters and organized them into the 194th Mine Countermeasures Squadron in October 1995. By 1997, Singapore will add six more Fearless-class patrol boats and at least one Swedish-built Sjöormen-class diesel submarine.[8]

Malaysia recently added two new British-built frigates to its two Kasturi-class corvettes, all armed with Harpoons and Exocets. Having excellent anti-air capabilities, the new frigate *Lekiu,* 30, was commissioned in December 1995 with a sixteen-cell Seawolf SAM vertical-launch group, and her sister *Jebat,* 29, will follow in August 1996. Surprisingly, Malaysia "agreed to purchase two of the four Iraqi Assad-class guided missile combatants from Italy," despite their small size and equipment incompatibility with other Malaysian navy vessels. However, that appears to be only an interim solution. Malaysia plans to build "as many as 27 1,200-ton new generation patrol vessels (NGPVs) . . . over the next fifteen years, at either Penang Shipbuilding Corporation or the ex-Navy Lumut Dockyard, or possibly both" in "what will undoubtedly be the largest

[7] Jane's reports that the HY-2 and JY-1 have ranges of 80 km and 40 km, respectively. Richard Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 1995–96* (Surrey, England: Jane's Information Group Limited, 1995), pp. 114–41. The U.S. Naval Institute reports that the HY-2 and JY-1 have ranges of 95 km and 32 km, respectively. The HY-2 has a land-based variant, the Silk Worm. Bernard Prézelin and A.D. Baker III, eds., *The Naval Institute Guide to Combat Fleets of the World 1993* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1993), p. 87.

[8] See Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 1995–96,* pp. 636–42; International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1995/96* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 172, 187–88; Prézelin and Baker III, eds., *The Naval Institute Guide to Combat Fleets of the World 1993,* pp. 382–83, 630–31; Timothy M. Laur and Steven L. Llanso, *Encyclopedia of Modern U.S. Military Weapons* (New York: Berkeley Publishing Group, 1995), pp. 261–63; "World Navies in Review," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* (hereafter *Proceedings*), Mar. 1996, pp. 111–12; "Combat Fleets," *Proceedings,* Nov. 1995, p. 93; "Combat Fleets," *Proceedings,* Oct. 1995, p. 125; "Combat Fleets," *Proceedings,* Aug. 1995, p. 93; and "World Navies in Review," *Proceedings,* Mar. 1995, p. 114.

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naval construction program in Southeast Asian history." These ships are anticipated to be fitted out with modern anti-ship and anti-air missiles.[9]

Furthermore, both Malaysia and Singapore have augmented their air forces with modern combat aircraft. Malaysia has taken delivery of eighteen Russian-built MiG-29s, eight American-built F/A-18Ds, and the first eighteen of a total order of twenty-eight British-built Hawk 108/208s. Singapore can deploy up to eighteen F-16A/Bs and will soon have an additional eighteen F-16C/Ds. For reconnaissance, Singapore fields four E-2C Hawkeye airborne early-warning (AEW) aircraft that can not only detect and track multiple targets but also provide integrated over-the-horizon targeting data for the Harpoon missiles aboard its naval units. Lastly, Southeast Asian operations in the waters adjoining the Spratly Islands would be facilitated by Malaysia's completion of its second-largest naval base, which can accommodate as many as 2,500 personnel, at Kota Kinabalu on Borneo, just 310 km from Swallow Reef.[10]

Nevertheless, Southeast Asian forces' operational advantage in geography and weapons technology may be offset by their inability to cope with mass. Without automatic reloading mechanisms, Southeast Asian warships must retire to rearm once their missiles are expended. Chinese commanders could then exploit their mass to absorb losses, bring up follow-on forces, and close with their adversaries. However, for Chinese warships to reach that point, the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and Naval Air Force (PLANAF) must keep the skies above their naval ships free of enemy tactical aircraft. As stated in one official Chinese article, "Without control of the air, there will be no mastery of the sea."[11]

Chinese Air and Naval Air Forces

Despite their imposing collection of fighter and attack aircraft (see Table 1), Chinese air and naval air forces must still resolve several significant problems—including range, aircraft maintenance, training, and number of advanced aircraft—before they can ensure air superiority or provide reliable tactical air support for naval units near the Spratly Islands.

[9] The program "was to have been announced at the LIMA '95 show at Langkawi last December, but the decision has been deferred until the spring. Many international companies are bidding for prime contractorship in this prestigious program, worth up to $2.2 billion. A prerequisite is maximum technology-transfer and participation by local industries." "World Navies in Review," *Proceedings,* Mar. 1996, pp. 111–12. See also Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 1995–96,* pp. 425–34; International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1995/96,* pp. 187–88; and Prézelin and Baker III, eds., *The Naval Institute Guide to Combat Fleets of the World 1993,* pp. 630–31.

[10] "Senator Deplores Planned Base," *Manila Chronicle,* Nov. 29, 1989; "Malaysia's 2nd Largest Naval Base Planned," *Philippine Daily Inquirer,* Nov. 28, 1989.

[11] Zhang Ze'nan, "New Developments in the Modern Construction of the Chinese Navy," *Jianchuan Zhishi,* No. 8, 1987, p. 2, quoted in Lewis and Xue, *China's Strategic Seapower,* p. 227.

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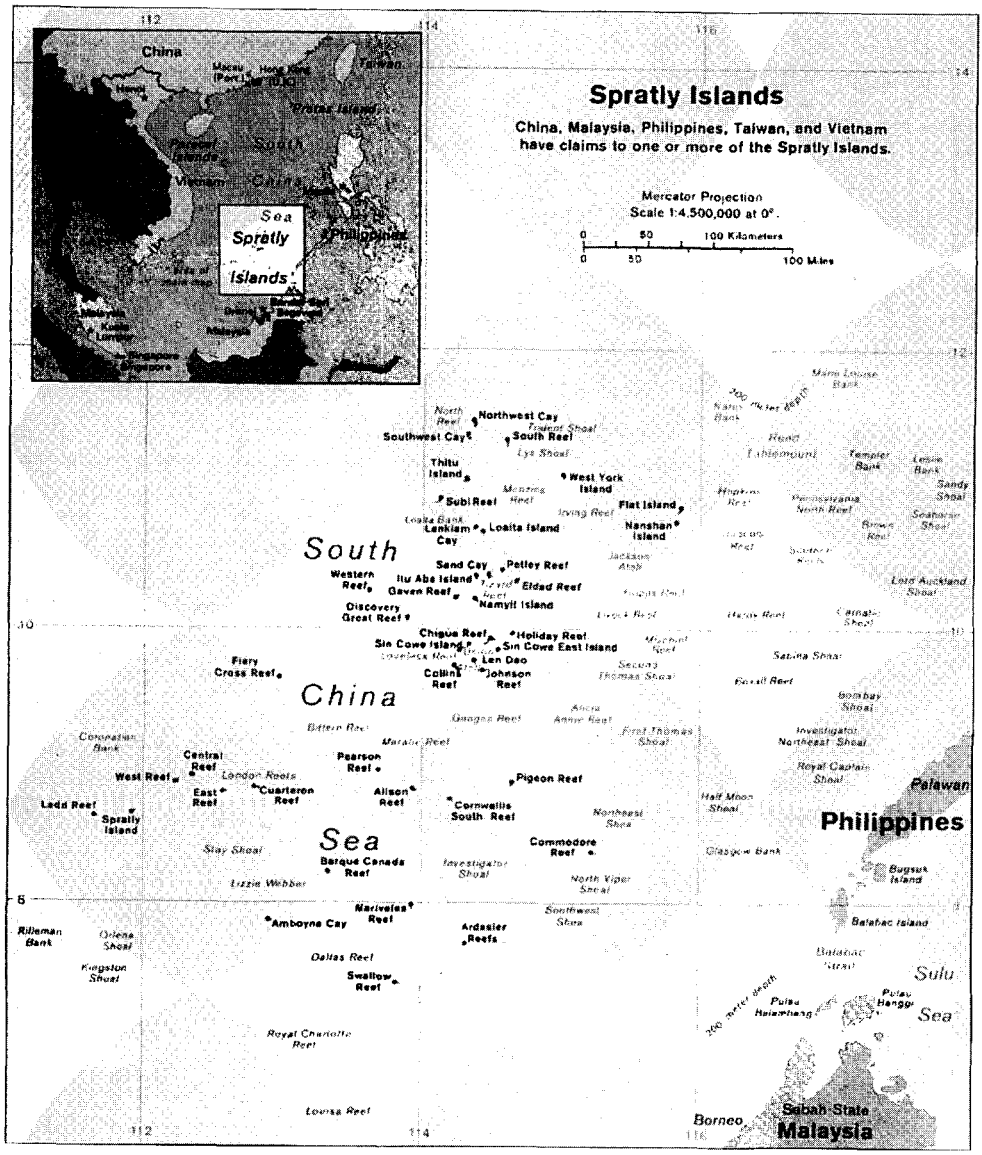
Map 2
South China Sea
(detail from previous map)



Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C.

Range. China's range problem is, at least in part, derived from Mao Zedong's strategic principle of an "active defense" *(jiji fangyu)*, in which he envisioned that China would be defended in depth with mobile forces and prepared battlefields far to the rear. Although Chinese strategists tinkered with the idea of positional warfare after the Korean armistice in 1953, the Sino-Soviet

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Table 1
Principal Chinese Combat Aircraft

Aircraft	PLAAF	PLANAF	Standard Combat Load (kg)	Range (km)	
				low-low-low	high-low-high
J-5 (MiG-17F)	400	600	500		560
J-6 (MiG-19)	3000		1000		550
J-7 (MiG-21)	500		4 AAM	370	600
J-8	100		7 AAM		800
Q-5	400+	100	2000	400	600
Su-27	26		6 AAM		1500

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1995/96* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 308–11. J-6 high-low-high range is the author's estimate.
Low-low-low and high-low-high refer to the altitude of a fighter's approach, attack, and egress, respectively. Flying at a lower altitude, where the air is denser, results in a higher drag and lower fuel economy.

border clashes in the late 1960s moved the PLA back to the concept of "active defense and luring the enemy deep" *(jiji fangyu, youdi shengru)* by 1977.[12] Thus, many of China's outlying airbases were constructed only as a first line of defense and, as a result, were not equipped to service the advanced aircraft now entering the Chinese air forces. More important, their runways were not designed to bear the type of punishment that the weight of modern fighters like the Su-27 can inflict. Given the PLAAF's current "strategy of 'light front, heavy rear' *[qian qing hon zhong]*, it is unlikely the air force can justify building new airfields near the country's borders."[13] Consequently, Chinese air operations in the South China Sea would have to be conducted from better-constructed and better-equipped air bases in rear areas much farther from the Spratly Islands.

Even from China's forward air bases, most Chinese fighter and attack aircraft still cannot reach the disputed islands. (See Table 2.) Carrying a standard combat load, even the PLAAF's newest fighter, the Su-27, would have a loiter time over the Spratly Islands of less than thirty minutes.[14] Although China is rumored to be negotiating for the purchase of up to seventy-nine MiG-31 fighters to be assembled in Guizhou Province under a cooperative agreement with Moscow, the MiG-31 would not solve the range problem because its range is no greater than that of the Su-27.[15] Until recently, only the H-6D, China's main

[12] Ibid., pp. 211–19.
[13] Kenneth Allen, Glenn Krumel, and Jonathan D. Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1995), p. 124.
[14] Nayan Chanda, Rigoberto Tiglao, and John McBeth, "Territorial Imperative," p. 16.
[15] Kristof, "The Rise of China," p. 66.

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Table 2
Estimated Flight Distances (km)

	Nanshan Island	Spratly Island	Swallow Reef
Chinese air bases			
Woody Island	790	920	1080
Yulin	1100	1125	1325
Zhanjiang	1300	1400	1590
Southeast Asian air bases			
Ho Chi Minh City	975	625	880
Lauban	610	525	290
Kota Kinabalu	535	560	315
Kudat	435	575	350
Phan Rang	760	465	710
Puerto Princesa	330	750	610
Sandakan	600	760	520
Thitu Island	190	360	415

Source: The author's estimates

bomber, could reach the Spratly Islands from its air base at Zhanjiang and return. As a result, Chinese planners have been diligently attempting to develop methods that will extend the range of their aircraft.

The two most direct solutions to China's range problem would be to require Chinese aircraft to carry external fuel tanks or to reduce their standard combat load. Both solutions, however, would decrease their ability. External fuel tanks would increase the aircraft's total mass and thus restrict its speed and maneuverability. On the other hand, a reduced combat load would diminish the firepower that each Chinese pilot could command in an engagement, placing him and his aircraft at greater risk. Since China will probably neither acquire nor construct a fully operational aircraft carrier along with a trained air crew before the end of the next decade, there are only two ways China can maintain a strong and constant air cover over the Spratly group: aerial refueling or the development of an intermediate air base between southern China and the Spratly Islands.

Although never officially acknowledged, China likely purchased aerial refueling technology from Iran and "equipped four of its combat aircraft with air refueling . . . 'bolt on' probes provided [originally] by the United States for

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Iranian F-5 aircraft." In addition, a Chinese Y-8 transport and possibly an H-6D bomber were reported to have been converted into test tanker platforms.[16]

As is often remarked, Chinese air forces now possess the Su-27, which can utilize aerial refueling to extend its range. However, it is uncertain whether the Su-27s China purchased have that capability or are compatible with the aerial refueling technology acquired from Iran. Moreover, aerial refueling is an arduous task demanding a level of proficiency and precision that Chinese air forces, with their basic air-to-air and air-to-ground communications, do not currently possess. Aircraft and tankers engaged in refueling must act in concert to rendezvous at specified coordinates, altitude, bearing, and velocity. They then must maneuver delicately at close distances to effect a link-up. All that requires rigorous practice and flight time that China, so far, has not provided its pilots.

Lastly, the whole process must take place over the South China Sea for it to be of any use. But since the PLAAF pilots who operate China's Su-27s never train over open ocean, it would be a challenge for them to navigate reliably over such a large, featureless expanse to a set of distant coordinates. Moreover, Chinese tankers operating over the South China Sea would need to be defended from Southeast Asian interceptors, effectively drawing away a number of China's precious Su-27s from their real missions of air superiority and tactical air support.

The development of an intermediate air base between southern China and the Spratly Islands appeared to have become a reality when Chinese engineers constructed a 2,700-meter airstrip on Woody Island, the largest member of the Paracel (Xisha) Islands. While the airstrip, 345 km from Yulin—China's southernmost mainland air base—and 920 km from Spratly Island, is long enough to support all types of Chinese combat aircraft, there is little space on the tiny (1.88 km^2) island for dedicated aircraft shelters, like hangars or even revetments. Unless kept in a protected environment, sophisticated aircraft like the Su-27 can deteriorate rapidly, particularly in the humid, briny climate of the South China Sea.

Shortage of space also restricts the volume of munitions and jet fuel—vital for extended air operations—that can be stored on the island. Even if a regular flow of supplies could be established from the mainland, Woody Island's inadequate docking facilities, consisting currently of a single jetty supplemented by small ferries, would limit the rate at which these supplies could be unloaded.

Like the runways of other forward Chinese air bases, the Woody Island airstrip was not designed for the Su-27. Unremitting use by the Su-27 or heavier aircraft would erode the airstrip's surface and could render it inoperable. Maintenance and repair facilities on the island are minimal even though "modern high performance aircraft require elaborate supporting structures to make them

[16] Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century*, pp. 170–71. See also Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *China Wakes: The Struggle for the Soul of a Rising Power* (New York: Times Books, 1994), p. 382.

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functional."[17] In fact, one of the principal reasons cited to explain why the first batch of Su-27s was not assigned to air bases in southern China was that the PLAAF met with so many unanticipated infrastructure and logistical problems that the cost of deploying the aircraft to the region far outweighed the benefit of doing so. Therefore, while certainly an asset to Chinese forces in the South China Sea, Woody Island remains far from being a primary base of operations.[18]

Most Chinese fighter and attack aircraft cannot reach the Spratly Islands.

Aircraft maintenance. One of the typically overlooked, but important, aspects of military readiness is proper maintenance, particularly for sophisticated combat aircraft. Many Chinese units "purport to have an operational ready rate of 95 percent," high even for Western air forces. However, these claims do not "reflect that each aircraft only logs about 100 hours annually (barely three hours a week) and that most of this is navigation."[19] Complex maneuvering takes a much greater toll on aircraft and lowers their overall performance.

The most serious aircraft maintenance problem is often the engine. Engine wear is caused by prolonged exposure to the high temperatures created by flying at high velocities or for extended periods of time. Of no minor concern to Chinese air forces, "the PLAAF's fighter engines [such as the Chengdu WP7B (BM), Liyang WP13A II, and Klimov RD-93] require a major overhaul after 300 to 350 hours [of flying time], a second overhaul after an additional 200 to 250 hours, and a third after an additional 150 hours. After that, the engines are scrapped."[20] (Not surprisingly, these overhaul rates are comparable to those for other Soviet-designed engines in Warsaw Pact air forces during the cold war.) These rates are far greater than even those of the complex F100-PW-220 and F100-PW-229 engines that power Singapore's F-16s, which have been criticized for requiring substantial overhaul every 1300 hours.[21]

The extreme fragility of China's Soviet-designed engines is directly related to the decreasing range of a growing number of its fighter and attack aircraft. These aircraft will invariably demand more support personnel and spare parts at frontline air bases to keep their sortie rates high. Unfortunately for the Chinese, the PLAAF's "light front, heavy rear" strategy denies frontline air bases, like those on Hainan Island and Woody Island, good maintenance and repair facilities. To make matters worse, "not all spare parts [among Chinese combat aircraft] are interchangeable. For example, because the rivets in each aircraft

[17] Eliot A. Cohen, "The Meaning and Future of Air Power," *Orbis*, Spring 1995, pp. 191–92.

[18] Chien Chung, "Economic Development of the Islets in the South China Sea" (paper presented at the American Enterprise Institute Conference, Sept. 7–9, 1994). To peruse good aerial photographs of Woody Island, see Pan Shiying, "The Nansha Islands: A Chinese Point of View," *Window*, Sept. 3, 1993, pp. 23–37.

[19] Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century*, p. 123.

[20] Ibid., p. 178. See also Paul Jackson, Kenneth Munson, and John W.R. Taylor, eds., *Jane's All the World's Aircraft 1995–96* (Surrey, England: Jane's Information Group Limited, 1995), pp. 48–68, 781.

[21] Author's conversation with a former Pratt and Whitney engineer. The F100-PW-220 engine requires overhaul after every four thousand cycles of use. Above average use of the engine is approximately three cycles/hour. Andrew Cockburn, *The Threat: Inside the Soviet Military Machine* (New York: Random House, 1983), pp. 238–39.

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are hand drilled, the holes are not all in the same place. Therefore, when a subsystem, such as the radio, is pulled out to be repaired, the aircraft does not fly until that radio is replaced." Thus, "each base has a one-year supply of spare parts for each aircraft," greatly limiting the PLAAF's mobility in case of a crisis.[22]

Securing a reliable source of spare parts is an essential part of maintenance. The Indian Air Force, which operates thirty-six squadrons of MiG fighters, was reported to have been scrambling for spare parts in 1994. Fortunately for China, its December 1995 agreement with Russia includes the licensed production of the Su-27, which will eventually ameliorate many of its most serious problems with spare parts.[23] Until then, however, China will have to rely on Russian sources.

Despite Chinese claims that the PLAAF achieved a 97.5 percent readiness rate and a 99.7 percent takeoff rate for its aircraft during the Sino-Vietnamese conflict in 1979, it was in reality "not a difficult feat with such a low sortie rate."[24] The PLAAF launched some 8,500 sorties—including "area familiarization, flights during the 30-day conflict, and postconflict sorties"—during a period of two to three months. Inasmuch as 700 aircraft were deployed to the Vietnamese border, that suggests only a dozen sorties per aircraft over sixty-plus days. (By contrast, USAF aircraft in a European war were expected to fly up to three sorties per day.)[25] What is more, aerial combat over the Spratlys could be much more intense than in China's expedition into Vietnam. Unless Chinese air and naval air forces can maintain a high readiness rate throughout a South China Sea campaign, they face the prospect of losing air superiority. The fact that the Chinese air force has flown twenty-six Su-27s since 1992 and still has major maintenance concerns is a worrisome indicator.

Training. Although the new doctrinal rigor infused into China's pilot training program has improved the general abilities of the PLAAF and PLANAF, Chinese pilots still average only between 80 and 150 hours of flying time each year, in contrast with the more than 200 hours that their Malaysian and Singaporean counterparts receive.[26] In fact, even after lengthy training in Russia, the pilots assigned to fly the initial batch of twenty-six Su-27s remained "so unskilled that Russian pilots had to deliver the planes to Chinese bases."[27] Even now, Chinese commanders, fearful of damaging their new aircraft, have husbanded their use, restricting Chinese pilots to little more than navigation flights and basic maneuvers. Meanwhile, Singaporean pilots have cut their teeth by training at Luke Air Force Base with the U.S. 58th Tactical Fighter Wing.

[22] Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century,* p. 178.

[23] Patrick E. Tyler, "China to Buy 72 Advanced Fighter Planes From Russia," *New York Times,* Feb. 7, 1996. See also International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1994–1995* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 155.

[24] Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century,* p. 93.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., p. 130.

[27] Kristof and WuDunn, *China Wakes,* p. 382.

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Moreover, the instruction Chinese pilots receive remains circumscribed. Because the training of each service, whether air force or naval air force, tends to be built rigidly around service-specific missions, Chinese pilots from the two services are often incompatible. PLAAF pilots, for instance, are never trained to operate over open ocean or provide tactical air support for naval units—a particularly problematic situation for Chinese commanders since all twenty-six Su-27s currently in Chinese service have been assigned to the PLAAF.[28] Its officers' handbook specifically states that

> flying over water and over land is completely different. When flying over the ocean, there are no ground markers as reference points; it is difficult to estimate altitude and distance; weather changes quickly, visibility is low, and the horizon is difficult to discern; there is no navigation equipment on the ocean, and it is difficult to deal with special situations when they appear. Pilots encounter control problems over the water every day, which greatly complicates training. Therefore, the farther one flies from the coastline, the more problems there are and the more difficult it becomes.[29]

Nor are PLANAF pilots routinely trained in air-superiority roles. Even within the services there are substantial training barriers. Whatever capability is resident in the J-8 fighter for tactical air support, for instance, may never be exhibited if its Chinese pilot has been trained only in air-superiority maneuvers. Consequently, Chinese air forces, if called into action, might fail to accomplish the most elemental coordination between air and naval forces. Significant technical and doctrinal differences also exist between the PLAAF and PLANAF in terms of command, control, and communications architecture.[30]

While Chinese air forces performed adequately in the 1995 and 1996 naval and air demonstrations and exercises off the northern and southwestern coasts of Taiwan, the PLAAF and PLANAF have not resolved many of their worst training deficiencies.

Advanced aircraft. The successful December 1995 conclusion of China's acquisition of the final forty-six Su-27s of a total order of seventy-two aircraft from Russia has many observers proclaiming another leap in Chinese air capability. The Chinese air force currently operates the initial twenty-six Su-27s (twenty-two Su-27s and four Su-27UBs) from this order. These aircraft were assigned to the PLAAF's 3rd Air Division based at Wuhu, 270 km west of Shanghai and far removed from the South China Sea. The second batch of twenty-four Su-27s is reported to be earmarked for deployment with the PLANAF on Hainan Island.[31]

On the whole, however, seventy-two Su-27s still represent a relatively small number of fighters, particularly for a country like China that faces potential conflict all along its borders. It is unlikely that Chinese leaders—many of whom remain concerned with the long-range threats of Russia and Japan—would be

[28] Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century,* p. 206.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., p. 125.
[31] Tyler, "China to Buy 72 Advanced Fighter Planes From Russia."

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willing to stake all their new and expensive aircraft in a single venture in a discretionary conflict in the South China Sea.[32] As Eliot Cohen pointedly remarked, the expensive aircraft of today are no longer the "easily expendable commodities" they were in World War II.[33]

Only after China is able to exploit fully its $2 billion Su-27 production license can it significantly alter the correlation of forces in the South China Sea. However, building on license is still a difficult process. Chinese engineers needed six years to bring the relatively simple MiG-21 into limited production as the J-7, and "if the Su-27 is chosen to be the next standard fighter, a lengthy development cycle could again result in China building its air force around an aircraft that is old by the time it sees service in large numbers."[34] Everything from metal alloys to solid state electronics must be carefully reproduced. That is not to diminish in any way the impact that Chinese production of Su-27s will have. Indeed, unless Southeast Asian countries are able to maintain a credible conventional deterrent to China's new Su-27s, they will find themselves in increasing danger. But China's stalled J-10 "new fighter" project, created from the abandoned Israeli Lavi design, continues to cast doubt on China's ability to overcome its persistent engineering deficiencies.[35]

China is interested in developing an airborne early-warning capability and has converted a Tu-4 bomber and possibly a Y-8 transport into preliminary platforms for such a role. However, China currently has no known operational AEW aircraft, despite a fleeting November 1993 BBC report that China may have installed British-built Nimrod radar systems on three of its ten Il-76 transports, assigned to the 13th Air Division based near Wuhu, in order to create A-50 AEW platforms.[36] It is, however, much more likely that the Il-76s will be used to support Chinese airborne brigades.

Chinese Naval Forces

With Chinese air superiority in some question, the importance of capable Chinese ship-based air defenses becomes paramount. Currently, the most capable Chinese anti-air warfare ship is the Luhu-class destroyer. The Rice Screen three-dimensional air-search radar aboard the Luhu class can detect and track airborne contacts out to a range of 185.3 km. Once these contacts come within 13 km of the ship, the destroyer can then engage them with its eight French-built Crotale missiles. In addition to relatively good communications, seakeeping

[32] On Chinese threat perceptions, see Shulong Chu, "The PRC Girds for Limited, High-Tech War," *Orbis*, Spring 1994, pp. 180–83.

[33] Cohen, "The Meaning and Future of Air Power," p. 193.

[34] Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century*, pp. 223–24.

[35] Ibid., pp. 144–46.

[36] Bernard Blake, ed., *Jane's Radar and Electronic Warfare Systems 1995–96* (Surrey, England: Jane's Information Group Limited, 1995), p. 258. The British Broadcasting Corporation report stated that China may have purchased sixteen British-built Nimrod radar systems in 1990–91. Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century*, p. 172.

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qualities, and chaff defenses, the Luhu class houses the Chinese navy's first electronic combat information suite, the French-built TAVITAC combat data system.

The Crotale SAM and TAVITAC combat data system can also be found aboard at least three of China's sixteen Luda-class destroyers and will probably be fitted out on additional Luda-class ships as they become available. The *Kaifeng,* 109, in the North Sea Fleet and *Zhuhai,* 168, in the South Sea Fleet were modernized in 1990–91 with French assistance, and a third Luda class was reported to have been similarly modernized in 1995.[37] These ship upgrades are particularly important for Chinese naval operations in the South China Sea since the Luda class would most likely be called upon to fill any Chinese task force's air defense requirements until enough Luhu-class destroyers are constructed. Two Chinese frigate classes also mount SAM defenses. Both the newer Jiangwei class and older Jiangdong class are equipped with Chinese-built HQ-61 launchers and PL-9 missiles, which have an effective range of 8.5–10 km and can reach an altitude of 5,000 meters. However, this SAM system, under development since the 1960s and first deployed in the 1980s, has had a "long history of problems."[38] Each Jiangwei class is armed with one sextuple HQ-61 launcher, and each Jiangdong class fields two.

To further aid their operations, Chinese naval commanders would seek to organize their ships into tactical formations that would minimize their exposure to air attack while maximizing their air defense resources. On the operational level, two fundamental types of organization exist: concentration and dispersal. Concentration could mitigate Chinese deficiencies in command and control and give local commanders direct access to a maximum of air defense assets, but it could also make the main body vulnerable by making its detection more likely. In contrast, dispersal makes detection of the main body less likely by physically separating its parts but raises the specter that the various task forces could be engaged piecemeal and defeated in detail. In considering the South China Sea operational environment, however, Chinese commanders are likely to choose dispersal over concentration. Dispersal in this environment holds the possibility of dividing Southeast Asia's small air forces—making them vulnerable to interception and destruction by a locally superior Chinese force.

Ultimately, the number of task forces that the PLAN can form will be strongly influenced by its small number of capable anti-air warfare ships, since each task force must contain some warships able to manage the task force's

[37] Since the first of its class was completed in 1971, the Luda class has undergone several upgrades, and as a result, the armament and electronic equipment aboard the sixteen operational ships of the class vary. "World Navies in Review," *Proceedings,* Mar. 1995, p. 114. See also International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1995/96,* p. 177; Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 1995–96,* pp. 120–21; and Prézelin and Baker III, eds., *The Naval Institute Guide to Combat Fleets of the World 1993,* p. 90.

[38] Richard Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 1994–95* (Surrey, England: Jane's Information Group Limited, 1994), p. 122; Tony Cullen and Christopher F. Foss, eds., *Jane's Land-based Air Defense 1995–96* (Surrey, England: Jane's Information Group Limited, 1995), pp. 112–13. The HQ-61 launcher is derived from a land-based variant that has proven to be unreliable.

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integrated air defenses. Currently, the Chinese navy possesses only two Luhu-class and three Crotale-armed Luda-class destroyers, and six Jiangwei-class and two Jiangdong-class frigates. Further production of the Luhu class has been recently stymied by a shortage of LM 2500 propulsion gas turbines. Ukraine may supply "gas turbines for the third and subsequent [Luhu-class] ships."[39]

However, the consequences of such a small number of ships capable of effective air defense go far beyond task-force building. Because of China's long coastline, the PLAN's anti-air warfare ships are dispersed among its three fleets, each defending a section of that coastline. Only the Chinese navy's South Sea Fleet, operating from Zhanjiang, covers the South China Sea.[40] In case of a crisis near the Spratly Islands, the time required to redeploy the anti-air warfare ships from the other two fleets would effectively slow Chinese operations and allow Southeast Asian forces to gather strength and gain a temporary tactical advantage.

More important, the small number of air defense ships could rob China of the advantage of strategic or operational surprise. Any salient shifting of these warships to the South China Sea prior to a crisis would certainly alert Southeast Asian countries to the possibility of a surprise Chinese action in the Spratly Islands. That is particularly true because most of China's most advanced anti-air ships, including its two Luhu-class destroyers, are assigned to the North Sea Fleet—defending the historic seaward approaches to Beijing. In fact, the South Sea Fleet is the least modern of all three Chinese fleets. Aside from the *Zhuhai,* the Luda-class destroyers in the South Sea Fleet are among the Chinese navy's least capable. While all are equipped for underway replenishment, few have Rice Screen air-search radars, and none has SAM air defenses. Some other ships assigned to the South Sea Fleet, like the Chengdu-class and Jiangnan-class frigates, are nearing retirement.[41] Thus, until China can build enough anti-air warfare ships to make such shifting unnecessary, any sudden movement of these easily tracked ships will give observers a hint to Chinese intentions.

Similarly, Chinese intentions may be revealed by an increase in the number of Chinese familiarization cruises in the waters adjoining the Spratly Islands, which may expand from one or two frigate patrols to coordinated destroyer-frigate maneuvers. Since treacherous reefs and rocks abound in these shallow waters, Chinese navy captains would understandably want to undertake some sort of training in the area before being deployed there in a combat situation. In addition, because the PLAAF does not have, nor will it acquire "in

[39] Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 1995–96,* p. 119.

[40] The East Sea Fleet, operating from Shanghai, covers Taiwan. The North Sea Fleet, operating from Qingdao, covers Japan and the Korean Peninsula.

[41] These ships include the *Changsha,* 161; *Nanning,* 162; *Nanchang,* 163; *Guilin,* 164; *Zhanjiang,* 165; and *Zhuhai,* 168. Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 1995–96,* pp. 120–21; "World Navies in Review," *Proceedings,* Mar. 1996, pp. 111–12; and Prézelin and Baker III, eds., *The Naval Institute Guide to Combat Fleets of the World 1993,* pp. 90–92. *Zhuhai* changed hull numbers from 166 to 168. Jeffery B. Goldman, "China's Mahan," *Proceedings,* Mar. 1996, p. 46. The last four Jiangnan-class frigates may have been retired in 1995. International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1995/96,* p. 177.

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the near to mid term," good airborne photographic capabilities, China's ability to conduct any "strategic [or] tactical planning for attacks on [Southeast Asian] forces and airfields" would be seriously constrained.[42]

Without reliable all-weather communications or surveillance equipment, China's small military outposts and weather-monitoring stations in the Spratly Islands are of dubious utility. Even a third-phase Chinese installation, complete with reinforced concrete merlons, can be bypassed by controlling the air and sea around it. Furthermore, suggestions that the conventionally armed DF-25 missile was designed for operations in the Spratly Islands are unpersuasive. While the DF-25 can reach the islands, its accuracy is suspect, and its threat to a mobile naval force can be discounted.

The Scenario

How would all the preceding influences blend together in a combat environment? To suggest an answer to this question, let us posit a scenario in which Malaysia and Singapore alone cooperate to halt a Chinese thrust into the South China Sea. This takes into account both the difficulty in creating and sustaining a large wartime coalition and the fact that these two countries have a history of intelligence exchange and military cooperation in the Five Power Defense Arrangement—under whose framework they conduct regular annual exercises in their Integrated Air Defense System.[43]

From the onset of the crisis, forces from these Southeast Asian countries, as well as additional stores of munitions and jet fuel, would be mobilized and deployed to Malaysian air bases at Kudat, Kota Kinabalu, Lauban, and Sandakan on the northwestern coast of Borneo. Malaysian and Singaporean Starburst, Rapier, Mistral, and Improved Hawk SAM batteries would follow aboard Malaysia's newly acquired Newport-class tank landing ship, the *Sri Inderapura*.

Throughout the deployment, at least one of Singapore's four E-2Cs would be constantly patrolling above the southern end of the Spratly group, where it would be outside the effective combat range of most Chinese fighters and protected by friendly forces. Using its APS-139 air-and-surface-search radar, the E-2C can detect and track more than two thousand different contacts out to a range of 463 km. The relative absence of land in the South China Sea and the fact that the APS-139 incorporates an improved ECCM system would prevent any appreciable image degradation caused by either background clutter or Chinese electronic jamming. The E-2C patrols could be supplemented by Singapore's four Fokker 50 Mk. 2 maritime reconnaissance aircraft, which possess

[42] Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century,* p. 125.

[43] "Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA) Marks 20th Year of Existence," *Asia Defence Journal,* June 1990, pp. 82–83.

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a multimode APS-134 radar and a chin-mounted infrared detection system for all-weather operations. A skilled APS-134 operator, by selecting various scan rates, pulse frequencies, and pulse widths, could search for surface targets as small as submarine periscopes and antennas.

Once a Chinese task force was located and assessed, Southeast Asian F/A-18Ds and F-16C/Ds, armed with AGM-65A/B Maverick missiles, could be assembled into their strike elements and assigned targets. When the task force was believed to be beyond Chinese air cover, the strike would be sent aloft. If Chinese fighters, refueling at Woody Island, returned to threaten the strike, MiG-29s, F-16A/Bs, and F-5Es would be deployed to intercept them. Because these Chinese fighters would still be operating near the edge of their combat radii, Southeast Asian interceptors orchestrated by an E-2C could easily defeat them or, at the very least, deflect their attention from the strike below.

Approaching the Chinese task force at a very low altitude and in close formation, the strike elements could use the earth's curvature to shield themselves from Chinese air-search radars, as Argentine Mirage IIIs and A-4s did against British air defenses in the South Atlantic in 1982. The strike aircraft could further cloak their radar signatures by restricting their electronic emissions. Real-time information regarding the Chinese task force could be downloaded to the strike elements by the orbiting E-2C. The longer the strike elements could delay detection, the more likely it is that they would survive Chinese air defenses to mount a successful attack.

Once the strike elements converged on the task force and closed within the range of their AGM-65A/B Mavericks, they would surge to a higher altitude, activate their targeting radars, and launch their missiles. From an altitude of 914 meters, the Maverick can be released 16.8 km from its target. From an altitude of 3,048 meters, the Maverick can be released as far as 22.2 km from its target. The F/A-18D, sweeping forward at an altitude of 20 meters, can reach a launch altitude of 914 meters and 3,048 meters in 3.9 seconds and 13.2 seconds, respectively. F-16C/Ds have comparable climb rates. Once launched, the AGM-65A/B has a demonstrated 85 percent probability of a successful hit.[44]

Although the strike aircraft are sure to be compromised from the moment they begin their ascent, Chinese warships, even those equipped with the Rice Screen air-search radar and Crotale SAM, would be sorely pressed to shoot down any of their attackers because the strike aircraft would likely release their munitions outside or just inside the 13 km range of the Crotale. Moreover, Chinese commanders with "no AEW capability" and "only rudimentary airborne reconnaissance capability" would be virtually blind to the precise direction of the air attack until the attack was already underway.[45] What aerial reconnaissance

[44] Laur and Llanso, *Encyclopedia of Modern U.S. Military Weapons*, pp. 272–74. "Maverick success rate (successful launch and guidance to the target) was approximately 80 to 90 percent for the more than 5,100 AGM-65s fired [in the Persian Gulf conflict]." U.S. Department of Defense, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1992), p. 778.

[45] Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century*, p. 125.

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the Chinese could muster would probably be limited and based on the Su-27's look-down Doppler radar platform. However, Su-27s used in this manner would presumably be intercepted by Malaysian and Singaporean F-5Es.

In planning the strike, Southeast Asian commanders would first target those warships most likely to control the task force's integrated air defenses and central communications. Suppression of Chinese air defenses would pave the way for follow-on air attacks. Without central communications, command and control would deteriorate, and the ships of the task force would be compelled to operate separately, making them more vulnerable to air attacks by less capable but more numerous strike aircraft like the Hawk 108/208, A-4PTM, and A-4S. Since none of their SAM systems can be automatically reloaded, Chinese warships would be forced to rely on locally directed anti-aircraft gunfire. Consequently, Malaysia's and Singapore's eighteen Hawk 108/208s, thirty A-4PTMs, and sixty-four A-4Ss would likely penetrate what was left of Chinese air defenses and ravage the remnants of the Chinese task force.

To this point, the scope of the battle has been circumscribed by political actors—not military commanders. Cognizant that the Malaysian air bases on the northwestern coast of Borneo are the operational key to any Southeast Asian defense, Chinese commanders would naturally want to neutralize them with a meticulously planned tactical strike at the outset of hostilities. However, an attack of this sort on the well-recognized sovereign territory of Malaysia—a defense ally of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore, as well as a friend of the United States—certainly carries weighty political and military implications. While the ultimate decision is a political one, in light of the Chinese military's new policies, the possibility of a Chinese air strike against these bases can no longer be discounted completely.

The Model

To secure the Spratly Islands against all challengers, China could be forced into a battle of attrition. The model presented here pits Malaysia's and Singapore's combined twenty-six F/A-18Ds and F-16C/Ds against three distinct Chinese task forces. (See Table 3.) This model is derived from one that was used to describe an air-ground battle between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces in Central Europe in the 1980s. Success in the latter model was achieved once NATO strike aircraft suppressed Pact air defenses, since NATO air forces could then interdict Pact military concentrations deep into the enemy's rear areas and thereby influence the forward ground battle. Similarly, in the South China Sea scenario, once Southeast Asian strike aircraft suppressed Chinese air defenses, they could then turn their full attention to engaging Chinese naval ships. Because many Southeast Asian pilots, like those of Malaysia and Singapore, fly American-built aircraft and are trained with American tactics, and Chinese naval crews

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Table 3
The South China Sea Model

Sortie	Total Aircraft	Ready Aircraft	Penetration	Cumulative Penetration	Shots on Target	Cumulative Shots	Kills	Cumulative Kills	Radars Destroyed	New Attrition Rate
1	26	20	18	18	72	72	15	15	0.375	0.1
2	24	19	17	35	68	140	14	29	0.725	0.07
3	22	17	16	51	64	204	13	42	1	0.042
4	21	16	14	14	56	56	11	11	0.275	0.1
5	19	15	13	27	52	108	11	22	0.55	0.078
6	17	13	12	39	48	156	10	32	0.8	0.056
7	16	12	11	50	44	200	9	41	1	0.036
8	15	12	10	10	40	40	8	8	0.2	0.1
9	13	10	9	19	36	76	7	15	0.375	0.084
10	12	9	8	27	32	108	6	21	0.525	0.07
11	11	8	7	34	38	136	5	26	0.65	0.058
12	10	8	7	41	28	164	5	31	0.775	0.048
13	9	7	6	47	24	188	5	36	0.9	0.038
14	8	6	5	52	20	208	4	40	1	0.028
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K

Input values: Initial aircraft = 26; Initial radars/task force = 40; Readiness rate = 0.8; Shots/aircraft = 4; Hit rate = 0.425; Kills/hit = 0.5; Probability of kill = 0.2125; Attrition rate = 0.1; Minimum attrition rate = 0.02.

Equations for Row 2: Sortie = 2; Aircraft = B1 – (C1 – D1); Ready = INT(B2*0.8); Penetrate = INT(C2*(1 – K2)); Cum. penetrate = E1 + D2; Shots = D2*4; Cum. shots = G1 + F2; Kills = INT(F2 0.2125); Cum. kills = I1 + H2; Radars destroyed = IF(I2/40 > 1, 1, I2/40); New attrition = (1 – J1)*(0.1 – 0.02) + 0.02.

(INT is a rounding function. The IF function prevents the percentage of radars destroyed from exceeding 1.)

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use Soviet-designed technical systems and tactical guidelines, one can assume that the combat effectiveness of the contending forces in the South China Sea would be approximately the same as that of forces in Central Europe.[46]

To compensate fully for the lack of practiced command-and-control direction among Southeast Asian forces, however, the model was designed with several assumptions favoring the Chinese. First, assume that each Southeast Asian strike aircraft will carry only four AGM-65A/Bs—even though the F/A-18D and F-16C/D can carry up to eight missiles—compensating for the possibility that some aircraft may not be solely dedicated to a strike role and, therefore, may carry air-to-air missiles or external fuel tanks. Secondly, assume that each Chinese task force is equipped with forty air-search radars or SAM guidance systems—exaggerating reality. Each task force would consist most likely of no more than ten destroyers and frigates, each with fewer than four air-search radars or SAM guidance systems. Thirdly, assume an attrition rate for Southeast Asian strike aircraft of 10 percent, twice that expected to be inflicted on NATO aircraft operating over Central Europe, but close to the attrition rate experienced by Argentine air forces during the most intense combat in the South Atlantic. (British warships were better equipped than their current Chinese counterparts, while Southeast Asian strike aircraft are more advanced and better armed than their Argentine counterparts. Moreover, Argentine A-4s needed to close within the range of all British air defense weapons before dropping their munitions, placing themselves at great risk. Still, Argentine Mirage IIIs and A-4s were able to sink five British ships and damage eleven others.) Fourthly, assume that the AGM-65A/B has a hit probability of .4025, even though the Maverick has a demonstrated hit probability of .85. And fifthly, assume a .5 probability of a hit successfully disabling its target.

Lastly, because of China's potential to field seventy-two Su-27s, let us assign all eighteen Singaporean F-16A/Bs to air-superiority roles rather than strike roles alongside Malaysia's eighteen MiG-29s. Although outnumbered two to one, the Southeast Asians can use their aircraft much more efficiently by relying on their E-2C reconnaissance capability. During the early 1980s, NATO aircraft would have encountered similar ratios over Central Europe.

The results of the model suggest that a combined Malaysian and Singaporean strike, consisting of a mixed force of eight F/A-18Ds and eighteen F-16C/Ds, could defeat three successive Chinese task forces in fourteen sorties. After the fourteenth sortie, all the air-search radars and SAM guidance systems aboard all three task forces would be destroyed. The surviving ships would then be vulnerable to follow-on air attacks. Unlike damaged Southeast Asian warships that can retire to the nearby Malaysian naval base at Kota Kinabalu, damaged Chinese warships must sail or be towed back to repair facilities at Yulin.

[46] Barry R. Posen, *Inadvertent Escalation: Conventional War and Nuclear Risks* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 219–34.

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Conclusions

To be sure, the fundamental assumption of the model above is the strength of the Malaysia-Singapore coalition. While Malaysia's imperative in the Spratly Islands is clear—to defend what it considers to be its sovereign territory—Singapore's imperative is less evident. Although Singapore does not want to see China dominating the region or the sea lanes through the South China Sea, its interests are not directly at stake. Nevertheless, Singapore does strongly support forward defense, greater military cooperation with Malaysia, and enhanced regional security cooperation against external threats.[47] Whatever its stand, Singapore's involvement is critical because its E-2Cs, Fokker 50 Mk. 2s, F-16A/B/C/Ds, and AGM-65A/B Maverick missiles would be the cornerstone of any effective Southeast Asian resistance.

Despite China's rapid economic growth in the 1980s and early 1990s, indicators now point to a "long, hard road" for China's future growth.[48] Less new revenue will be available to fuel China's accelerated acquisitions. Moreover,

> there are also constraints inhibiting extensive Russian military technology transfers to the PRC, such as a chronic shortage of hard currency in Beijing and a pervading apprehension in the Kremlin that a too well armed PLA on Russia's southern border is not in Moscow's interests. Similarly, given Russia's intent to expand its trade and commercial ties in Asia, it would not want to be seen as China's armorer in the manner that it was from 1950 to 1960. This would be especially so in Southeast Asia, where advanced long-range aircraft would be significant for PRC military operations in the South China Sea.[49]

For the PLA to overcome its current problems and prevail, Chinese strategists and planners must develop the operational maneuvers and deception skills necessary to create a favorable correlation of forces at a point of its choosing.

In January or February 1995, China tested the United States's commitment to its mutual defense treaty with the Philippines with regard to the Spratly Islands by descending on the Philippine-claimed Mischief Reef. The American response was subdued. The U.S. Department of State reissued its 1994 statement of neutrality in the Spratly Islands dispute and hoped that the "conflicting claims

[47] See Michael Vatikiotis, "The First Step," *FEER,* June 3, 1993, p. 18; Michael Vatikiotis, "Forging Stronger Links," *FEER,* Apr. 29, 1993, p. 26; Richard Stubbs, "Subregional Security Cooperation in ASEAN," *Asian Survey,* May 1992, pp. 397–410; Sheldon W. Simon, "The Regionalization of Defense in Southeast Asia," *The National Bureau of Asian Research,* June 1992; and Amitav Acharya, "Regional Military-Security Cooperation in the Third World: A Conceptual Analysis of the Relevance and Limitations of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)," *Journal of Peace Research,* 1992, pp. 7–21. Singapore's prime minister, Goh Chok Tong, has spoken with Beijing leaders about the Spratly Islands. See Rigoberto Tiglao,"Remote Control," *FEER,* June 1, 1995, p. 20.

[48] See "Keeping China Off the Rocks," *The Economist,* Feb. 10, 1996, pp. 35–36; and "A Survey of China," *The Economist,* Mar. 18, 1996, pp. 3–22.

[49] Parris H. Chang and Martin L. Lasater, *If China Crosses the Taiwan Strait* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1993), p. 29. See also Bin Yu, "Sino-Russian Military Relations," *Asian Survey,* Mar. 1993, pp. 302–16.

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[would] be resolved peacefully."[50] By contrast, although the Philippines did not challenge the seizure militarily, in late March its navy removed or destroyed Chinese markers on five atolls, reefs, and shoals, and the Philippine air force arrayed its entire fighter complement, five F-5Es of its 6th Tactical Fighter Squadron, to Thitu Island in the western portion of the Spratly group.[51]

Despite American neutrality, the United States does have a limited interest in the delimitation of sea lanes through the South China Sea, and since only China claims not only the Spratly group but also all of the South China Sea, the United States should oppose a unilateral Chinese resolution of the dispute. Excepting the possibility of a resurgent Russia drawing Chinese attention to the north, a conventional deterrent needs to be maintained as China continues to build its forces. However, limited objectives should be met with limited means. Therefore, from a military standpoint, the United States should: (1) export modern fighter aircraft (like the F-16C/D and F/A-18D), E-2C/D AEW aircraft, and particularly the typically overshadowed AGM-65A/B/C/D Maverick to closely aligned Southeast Asian countries—including Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore; and (2) share timely American satellite and signals intelligence regarding Chinese naval ship movements with Southeast Asian intelligence agencies.[52]

The Spratly Islands are a long-term Chinese objective. Until Chinese leaders are convinced that either their forces are strong enough to prevail or their adversaries' forces are too weak to resist, they will continue to refrain from committing their forces to a full-fledged assault.

[50] Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Peter Tomsen, letter included in packet of material concerning the South China Sea, U.S. Department of State, 1994.

[51] See Reginald Chua, "Chinese, Filipinos Stage a Stare-Down at Sea in Disputed Pacific Reef Area," *Wall Street Journal*, May 17, 1995; Rodney Tasker, "A Line in the Sand," *FEER*, Apr. 6, 1995, pp. 14–16; and International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1995/96*, p. 168.

[52] See Robert S. Ross, *Negotiating Cooperation: The United States and China, 1969–1989* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995); Kenneth Lieberthal, "The China Challenge," *Foreign Affairs*, Nov./Dec. 1995, pp. 35–49; Karl W. Eikenberry, "Does China Threaten Asia-Pacific Regional Stability?" *Parameters*, Spring 1995, pp. 82–103; Wayne Bert, "Chinese Policies and U.S. Interests in Southeast Asia," *Asian Survey*, Mar. 1993, pp. 317–32; and James A. Winnefeld et al., *A New Strategy and Fewer Forces: The Pacific Dimension* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1992).

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Beyond the Unipolar Moment

Moscow's Plans to Restore Its Power

by Richard F. Staar

Colonel General Valerii Mironov, a former deputy defense minister and now the principal military advisor to Russia's premier, recently stated that the "Cold War still goes on and only one definite period of it is over." To be sure, the general did not anticipate any significant military buildup "for at least ten years," that is, until the Russian economy improves, and indicated that no long-range concept had yet been set forth defining potential threats over the next fifteen years.[1]

It would also seem that the cold war continues in the minds of Russia's politicians. However, advisors to these civilian policymakers have proposed (as Mironov assuredly knows) a long-range national security concept, offering it for adoption as part of a new Russian military doctrine. For the West, this proposal suggests close monitoring of certain developments in Russia that may evolve into a qualitatively different and much more dangerous threat than that posed by the Russian military doctrine announced almost three years ago.

The Current Doctrine

That doctrine, signed by President Boris Yeltsin on November 2, 1993, and released to the press in summary form two weeks later, has been described as a transitional document. It proclaims that the "Russian Federation . . . does not regard any state as an enemy." However, the doctrine then proceeds to list ten potential sources of danger, such as local wars, especially those close to Russian borders; discrimination against Russian citizens living abroad; and expansion of military alliances to the detriment of Russia's security.[2] Under the

[1] Aleksandr Zhilin, "Ia ne militarist i ne konservator" (I am neither a militarist nor a conservative), *Moskovskie novosti*, Feb. 4–11, 1996, p. 14.

[2] "Osnovnye polozheniia voennoi doktriny Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Basic propositions of the Russian Federation's military doctrine), *Krasnaia zvezda*, Nov. 19, 1993.

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heading "Basic Principles in the Field of Security," the 1993 military doctrine mentions maintenance of stability in regions directly bordering on the Russian Federation as well as in the former Soviet satellites. In effect, then, the document asserts a sphere of influence that coincides with the one maintained by the USSR.

To carry out this doctrine, Russia's new armed forces were assigned the following priority tasks through the end of this century:

> establish mobile forces to conduct operations in any region where a threat may arise;
>
> provide security for other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), possibly by deploying Russian troops on their territories; and
>
> station troops outside of Russia, either together with units of another state or as exclusively Russian formations at their own separate bases.

The second and third of these priorities have been actively pursued by Moscow on the basis of bilateral agreements within the CIS. The first has apparently been abandoned, perhaps because Yeltsin fears that the elite airborne forces needed for such a task might support a coup d'état, led by some charismatic former paratrooper like Lieutenant General Aleksandr Lebed. At any rate, beginning in February 1996, the Ministry of Defense ordered four of the eight independent airborne brigades transferred to the ground forces (one each to the North Caucasus, Siberian, Transbaikal, and Far East military districts), and two of the five airborne divisions (at Pskov and Novorossiisk) were subordinated for special joint operations to the ground forces in the Northern and North Caucasus military districts, in which they are already located.[3] The remaining three air assault divisions became part of the strategic reserve. This breakup signifies indefinite postponement of the plan to establish mobile forces. In addition to fear of a coup, shortage of airlift capacity, budgetary restrictions, and developments in Chechnya undoubtedly contributed to the decision.

Apart from discussing the three priority tasks listed above, the 1993 doctrine devoted a section to military-technical support for the armed forces, including implementation of a long-range (ten-to-fifteen-year) program to develop new weapons and other military hardware, as well as to procure more and more advanced systems for the military.

None of the foregoing had been unexpected in the West, and much in the doctrine consisted of merely declaratory statements for Western consumption, like the proposition that "Russia has no enemies." Nevertheless, the document gave the generals exactly what they wanted: a definition of domestic missions for the army, a statement on Russia's responsibilities in the "near

[3] Sergei Arbuzov, "Chto stoit za reorganizatsiei VDV?" (What lies behind reorganization of [Air Assault Troops]?), *Voennoe obozrenie NG*, Feb. 10, 1996.

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abroad," and repudiation of the "no first use" principle regarding nuclear weapons. This last policy had been enunciated in 1982. The reversal in 1993 envisaged first use of such tactical or strategic warheads against other nuclear powers, their allies, and states not party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

A New National Security Concept?

Thus, the 1993 military doctrine contained worrisome elements. However, the ideas now being developed, if adopted, would represent a far more dangerous threat.

A recent study, reportedly commissioned by the Ministry of Defense, may provide some insight regarding the basis for a new military doctrine to be adopted in the not too distant future. Since the latter, if and when formulated, may not be released to the public, one must take seriously the opportunity to look into the security thinking provided by this study, entitled "Conceptual Theses for a Strategy Countering Principal External Threats to the National Security of the Russian Federation." (See Sidebars 1 and 2.)

The document was produced at the Institute for Defense Studies (Institut oboronnykh issledovanii—INOBIS), located about twenty miles northeast of Moscow. Among the founders of the institute were prominent members of three powerful organizations in the former USSR: Nikolai A. Shain, chief of the KGB's Main Economic Counter-Intelligence Directorate; Iurii D. Masliukov, chairman of the State Economic Planning Commission; and Vitalii Kh. Doguzhiev, the Soviet Union's deputy prime minister in charge of missiles and space-related issues.[4] Names of other founders and financial backers have not been released.

The INOBIS report begins with a discussion of threats to national security, in descending order of magnitude. Note that in each case the West is said to be the source of the threat.[5]

With regard to the Baltic states, the INOBIS report declares that if the three countries are invited to join NATO, Russian armed forces should immediately occupy Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Their membership in the Western alliance would represent no less a threat to Russia than Soviet nuclear weapons in Cuba posed for the United States in 1962. Furthermore, Estonia and Latvia are ruled by "undemocratic regimes, analogous to the earlier ones in South Africa and Rhodesia." Then, too, there exist "juridical and moral justifications for introducing Russian troops into the Baltic States": since Lithuania does not recognize the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939, "it follows that Russia and Belarus are legally

[4] Aleksandr Liasko, "Zakhvatit li Grachev pribaltiku?" (Will Grachev seize the Baltic states?), *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, Oct. 27–Nov. 2, 1995, p. 6.

[5] Anton Surikov, "Sotrudniki spets'instituta predlazaiut Rossii . . ." (Analysts at a specialized institute are proposing for Russia . . .), summary of INOBIS report, *Segodnia*, Oct. 20, 1995. A copy of the full twenty-three-page typescript was obtained by the author. Citations come from this latter source and have been translated by the author.

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Sidebar 1
INOBIS Report: Threats to Russia's National Security

1. Interference in the internal affairs of Russia by the United States and its allies.

2. Political and economic penetration of Azerbaijan by Turkey, the United States, Britain, and Germany, with Azerbaijan serving as a bridgehead for future Western expansion into Central Asia, the Volga region, and the Northern Caucasus through exploitation of "Turkic" and "Islamic" factors. [Turkey represents a key instrument of American policy in the foregoing regions, according to INOBIS.]

3. Attempts to isolate and remove Russia from Europe through an expansion of NATO that admits, in stages:

> Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary (within two or three years);
>
> Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria, Finland, and Austria—possibly also Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (by the year 2000); and
>
> Ukraine (probably in 2005).

Under no circumstances, INOBIS reasons, will Russia ever be accepted into NATO, because the two main proponents of expansion are Germany and the United States.

4. Unilateral disarmament of Russia [by the West] through:

> financing the degradation of Russian strategic weapons systems and R&D centers;
>
> attempting to force acceptance of unequal treaties like START II;
>
> demanding amendments to the ABM [anti–ballistic missile] agreement in an atmosphere of "cold peace"; and
>
> counteracting integration within the CIS.

entitled to annex the seaport of Klajpeda and the Vilnius region, respectively." This blatant non sequitur apparently did not bother the anonymous authors of the INOBIS report.

Nobody in the West will go to war over the Baltic states, according to INOBIS projections, because Western Europe needs to import 100 billion cubic meters of natural gas each year. Germany, France, Italy, Finland, Greece, and East-Central Europe will continue to purchase these and other raw materials from Russia, regardless of whether the three Baltic republics are occupied or not.

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Sidebar 2
INOBIS Report: Recommended Strategies to Neutralize Threats

1. Radically change economic relations by refusing to work with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

2. Review results from privatization of state property.

3. Prevent the West from exploiting Caspian Sea oil.

4. Block formation of territorial links between Turkey and Azerbaijan.

5. Stop the eastward expansion of NATO by establishing a military alliance of CIS members (without Ukraine).

6. Deploy tactical nuclear weapons to:

> the Western Theater of Military Operations (*teatr voennykh deistvii*—TVD)—Belarus (where close bilateral military cooperation already exists), the Kaliningrad special region, and warships on the Baltic Sea;
>
> the Northern TVD—along the Norwegian border and on the Barents Sea; and
>
> the Southern TVD—at Russian bases in Crimea, Abkhazia, Georgia, Armenia, and on the Black Sea.

The INOBIS study argues that this strategy is similar to that adopted by NATO during the cold war, when tactical nuclear warheads were stored in Western Europe.

In the event of a complete rupture in NATO-Russian relations, Moscow should sell nuclear and missile technology for military purposes to Iran, Iraq, and (after radical Islamic forces have assumed control) Algeria. Even a military alliance with Iran should not be excluded, "within the framework of which a contingent of Russian troops with tactical nuclear weapons could be deployed along the Persian Gulf coast and the Straits of Hormuz." The unstated implication here is that the West would not be willing or able to repeat a Desert Storm operation once such weapons had been deployed in Iran.

Over the next fifteen years, INOBIS avers, the number of Russian strategic nuclear weapons should be confined within START I limits. But during the next stage (beginning in 2009), the number of these weapons must be expanded by 400 to 500 upon development of the next-generation intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), each carrying six warheads, and the corresponding D-31 navy submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) system. When START I expires, it will be necessary to deploy at least 100 mobile ICBMs on railroad-car launch platforms.

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It is extremely important, INOBIS says, to counter U.S. plans for a "tactical ABM system" and American attempts to modify the 1972 treaty that would result in implementation of the Strategic Defense Initiative. Such developments would affect not only Russia and China but also India and Pakistan—all members of the nuclear-arms club. In this connection, Moscow may choose to deal with India in the same way that the United States treated Great Britain when the former provided Polaris and Trident missiles to carry British warheads. Taking a long-range view, such cooperation might also be extended by Russia to Iran and a number of other Muslim countries in Southwest Asia and North Africa, according to the INOBIS report.

That much of the foregoing already represents official thinking can be concluded from two events during February 1996. Viktor Mikhailov, atomic energy minister and member of the Security Council, told reporters that Russia would destroy all sites for tactical nuclear weapons deployed by NATO in any East-Central European country. Although no plans for such deployment exist, Mikhailov equated NATO eastward expansion with a policy of nuclear proliferation.[6]

Two weeks later, Generals Dmitrii Kharchenko and Gennadii Ivanov (identified as advisors to Russian defense minister Pavel Grachev) told members of a Swedish military commission visiting Moscow that Russia would withdraw from the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe and slow down compliance with START I "should Sweden, Finland, and the Baltic states become members of NATO." Also, they said, "There would be other unforeseeable consequences, namely that Russian nuclear weapons will be moved closer to the Nordic area and Central Europe."[7]

Russian Capabilities

These threats may represent a form of blackmail, and Moscow may have no intention of following through and implementing them. However, prudence dictates that one assess Russia's capabilities rather than rely on speculation about what a new leader in the Kremlin might do.

Ground forces. With an estimated strength of 670,000, the ground forces consist of about one-third draftees, with another 170,000 serving under contract. Although the overall manning level had been 64 percent during the fall of 1995, some units filled only four to five out of every ten billets.[8]

Boris Yeltsin has been weakening the regular armed forces, perhaps because he fears they might be disloyal to him. Possibly for the same reason, the attempt to build an all-volunteer force of professional officers and sergeants

[6] Lee Hockstader, "Russian Warns of Attack If NATO Expands East," *Washington Post,* Feb. 16, 1996.

[7] Sune Olofson, "Ryssland hotar riva upp avtal" (Russia's threat to tear up treaty), *Svenska Dagbladet* (Stockholm), Feb. 28, 1996.

[8] Pavel Maksimov, "Prizyvnikov ne khvataet . . ." (Insufficiency of draftees . . .), *Rossiiskie vesti,* Dec. 9, 1995.

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for the regular army is being cut back. This force had reached a total of 350,000 men and women under contract in all five branches, but that number will be reduced to 100,000, according to Defense Minister Grachev.

On paper, then, there exist seventeen armored, forty-seven motorized-rifle, and five airborne divisions. They are equipped with 19,000 main battle tanks (ranging from T-54s through the latest T-90s), about 20,000 artillery pieces, 600 (nuclear capable) surface-to-surface missile launchers, and approximately 2,600 attack and transport helicopters.[9] But much of this equipment is already obsolete, including 80 percent of the armored personnel carriers.

The main problem of the ground forces, according to a NATO study, involves a "breakdown of the personnel training system, caused by the shortage of conscripts, . . . the low quality of junior officers, and collapse of the project to create a cadre of competent long-service NCO's. This has resulted in a disastrous decline in combat capability of the ground forces."[10]

Perhaps fearing a coup, Yeltsin has weakened the regular ground forces.

A brief submitted to the parliamentary defense committee in Bonn adds that one-third of the food and fuel reserves stockpiled for war were consumed by the military during 1995; more than half of the troops had received no pay for months; between 50,000 and 70,000 conscripts refused to be inducted; and 3,000 conscripts deserted during the first half of the year.[11] Hence, the nominal sixty-nine ground divisions actually possess the potential of only half their number, if fully manned. Probably ten divisions are more or less prepared for combat. By contrast, Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) troops comprise twenty-nine divisions and fifteen brigades.[12]

Performance in Chechnya showed that only elite naval infantry and airborne assault units—neither of which should have been used to suppress such a limited insurgency—were capable of fighting well. The marines came from more than fifty units in the Baltic and more than one hundred coastal units or ships in the Pacific. (Airborne elements from the 7th and 21st divisions were also employed during early 1996 to dislodge a few hundred insurgents and destroy the village of Pervomaiskoe in Dagestan.[13])

While cutting back on the regular army, Yeltsin has been increasing the size of the other eleven armies, whose commanders report directly to the president and not to the Ministry of Defense. As a result, the total forces of these other armies are now about twice that of the regular ground forces. (See Table 1.) MVD troops have been substantially re-equipped and strengthened.

[9] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1995/96* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 114–15.

[10] Christopher Donnelly, "The Future of Russian National Security Policy" (paper presented at the Tri-Service Conference, London, Nov. 1995).

[11] Heinz Schulte, "Russian forces in deep crisis," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Jan. 31, 1996, p. 15.

[12] Valerii Borisenko, "Kto narashchivaet muskuly?" (Who is building muscles?), *Moskovskie novosti*, Feb. 11–18, 1996, p. 9.

[13] For a map showing airborne dispositions, see Igor' Korol'kov, "Pochemu Raduevu udalos' uiti iz Pervomaiskogo?" (How did Raduev escape from Pervomaiskoe?), *Izvestiia*, Feb. 8, 1996.

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Table 1
Russia's Other Armies

Agency	Troops*
1. Internal Affairs Ministry (MVD)	264,000
2. Federal Border Service (FPS)	210,000
3. Defense Highway Construction (FDSU)	170,000
4. Federal Security Service (FSB)	130,000
5. Railroad Troops Service (FSZhV)	100,000
6. Special Defense Construction (SSMO)	97,000
7. Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR)	77,000
8. Communications and Information (FAPSI)	54,000
9. Main Protection Directorate (GUO), including Presidential Security Service	44,000
10. Civil Defense Ministry (MChS)	40,000
11. Military Space Forces (VKS)	16,000
Total	1,202,000

* Note: Some of the figures on troop numbers are estimates.
Source: "O vnesenii izmenenii v federal'nom zakone 'O federal'nom biudzhete na 1995 god'" (Introduction of amendments to the federal law "On the federal budget for 1995"), *Rossiiskaia gazeta,* Aug. 25, 1995.

Regional-level gendarme regiments were being created during 1995, with one such unit for every two or three oblasts, in order to suppress potential unrest.[14] Border guards, too, are treated much better than regular army troops.

Air forces. Numbering 130,000 personnel, almost one-third draftees, the Russian air forces dispose of 2,150 combat aircraft divided among long-range, frontal, transport, reserve, and training commands. Theoretically, the air forces' 79 Tupelov-160, Tu-95MS, and Tu-22M bombers can deliver 271 nuclear weapons over a distance of 8,000 kilometers. However, many of the aircraft are grounded, owing to a lack of spare parts and to fuel shortages. Pilots do not receive sufficient training and fly fewer than half the hours per year of their counterparts in NATO.

Naval forces. Along with 200,000 sailors and marines, twenty percent of whom are conscripts, the navy disposes of 183 submarines (45 of them strategic) and 150 surface vessels. Its flagship is the 67,500-ton *Kuznetsov* aircraft

[14] Interview with Viktor I. Iliukhin, chairman of the Duma Security Committee, *Moskovskaia pravda,* Apr. 29, 1995.

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carrier with twenty fixed-wing jets (Su-34s) and eight to ten helicopters. Naval units are allocated among the Northern, Pacific, Baltic, and Black Sea Fleets and the Caspian Sea Flotilla. Nuclear-powered submarines carry 940 SLBMs. In addition to naval aviation personnel, there are about 15,000 naval infantrymen attached to various fleets.[15]

The primary tasks of the navy include strategic nuclear deterrence and defending maritime approaches to Russia. The Northern Fleet is the most powerful. It defends an Arctic bastion, centered on the Kola peninsula. The *Kuznetsov* and its escort group provide air defense in the Barents Sea. Undertaking naval infantry landings from the water remains a low priority: the thirteen amphibious ships probably could not place ashore more than 2,500 marines and 100 tanks. Readiness is another matter, with surface vessels and naval air units remaining in or near home waters. The criteria for alert duty seem to be a ship at an adequate manning level and fueled to sail.[16]

Yeltsin has increased the eleven armies that report to him.

Air defense forces. Comparable in size to the navy, air defense forces number 200,000 enlisted personnel and officers, of whom about 60,000 are draftees. This branch of the military disposes of 2,500 surface-to-air missile (SAM) launchers at about 250 sites, plus 850 fighter aircraft. These weapons defend administrative and industrial centers, especially the city of Moscow, which is surrounded by 100 launchers with two types of missiles: one that detonates its own nuclear warhead and destroys incoming missiles above the atmosphere; the other, a high-acceleration rocket that intercepts missiles in their descent through the atmosphere.[17]

Russia's military claims that its most recently deployed air defense system, the S-300 (SA-10 Grumble), is superior to the U.S. Patriot. The S-300, which has a range of 150 kilometers and a maximum engagement altitude of 30,000 meters, has been tested successfully against tactical ballistic missiles and has been adapted for use on ships, the naval version being deployed on Ushakov- and Slava-class cruisers. A Russian submarine-launched cruise missile flying over the Barents Sea was shot down by ground-based air defense using the S-300.[18]

Strategic missile forces. The 928 intercontinental ballistic missile launchers of the strategic missile forces (SMF) range from the SS-17 to the SS-25. The warheads carried by these ICBMs total 3,970. As of mid-January 1996, 48 SS-18 missiles were in Kazakhstan without warheads; in Ukraine, 300 warheads remained on SS-19s and SS-24s; in Belarus, 20 SS-25s also had warheads. Between 10 and 12 percent of the defense budget is expended on SMF maintenance. Of the SMF's 100,000 personnel, about a half are conscripts.

[15] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1995/96,* pp. 115–16.

[16] Radii Zubkov, "Flot kotoryi my poteriali" (The fleet which we have lost), *Voennoe obozrenie NG,* Jan. 13, 1996.

[17] Christopher Bluth, "Russian attitudes to missile defence," *Jane's Intelligence Review,* Jan. 1996, pp. 16–18.

[18] Vladimir Gundarov, "Staryi kon' borozdy ne isportil" (The old horse did not spoil the furrow), *Krasnaia zvezda,* Sept. 7, 1995.

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The START II Treaty, ratified by the United States but not by Russia, allows the latter to keep 105 of its SS-19 single-warhead missiles in silos. Yet even though 10 out of the 170 ICBMs in this category reportedly had been destroyed, Moscow purchased 32 others from Kiev and began proposing, back in November 1995, that it be allowed to keep all 170 SS-19s. This proposal has been supported by media criticism of the "unequal" START II Treaty.[19]

Ever since the May 1995 summit in Moscow, the Russian failure to implement agreements has brought cooperation with the United States on nuclear matters to a virtual halt. Exchange of information on stockpiles and reciprocal monitoring of storage facilities have not been fulfilled. Russia, in effect, has suspended talks on these and related issues. Reportedly, the General Staff has been reviewing its nuclear policy, which could include the option of limited "demonstration" nuclear strikes.[20]

Overall, while Russia's current military capabilities would enable its ground forces to occupy small countries like Lithuania (from the Kaliningrad region and the Baltic Sea), as well as Latvia and Estonia (from the Moscow and Northern military districts), such a conventional effort against Poland would fail. In the first place, it would be necessary to launch the attack from Belarus and Kaliningrad. Secondly, recent history suggests that 40 million Poles would frustrate such an invasion. On the other hand, there is no reason to doubt that Moscow could deploy tactical nuclear weapons throughout the areas delineated by the INOBIS report. That probably would be accomplished in secret.

Military Funding

Military funding is a generic term encompassing the defense budget and the state defense order. The former includes maintenance, housing and utilities, transportation, equipment repair, and replacement of weapons. The state defense order, which has been increasing dramatically, includes funds for research and experimental design work, as well as series production (as opposed to prototype production) of new weapons, resulting in direct contact with the military-industrial complex (*voenno-promyshlennyi kompleks*—VPK).

According to General Grachev, his ministry requested 71 trillion rubles for calendar year 1996 but was allocated only 41 trillion ($8.6 billion) for maintenance of the armed forces, about 12 percent of the 349 trillion ruble budget. In past years, the Duma has "corrected" such allocations upward. On February 7, 1996, the Security Council discussed nationalizing several large corporations and five leading private banks to raise funds for regular army and MVD troops.

That same Security Council meeting decided to allocate between 50 and 54 trillion rubles for the 1996 state defense order, or about 25 percent more

[19] Richard Ovinnikov, "Bezopasnost' Rossii—na kriticheskoi grani" (Security of Russia—at a critical point), *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, Jan. 20, 1996.

[20] Vladimir Nadein, "Ugasaet khudoe soglasie . . ." (A bad accord is failing . . .), *Izvestiia*, Jan. 20, 1996.

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than the regular Ministry of Defense budget.[21] These funds will pay for accelerated R&D of a new generation of weapons for the Russian armed forces as well as for production of such advanced equipment. During 1994, such military funding had amounted to only 8 trillion rubles ($2 billion). It was increased to 10 trillion rubles the following year, with another 7 trillion added toward the end of 1995.

With about 5.5 million employees in the military-industrial complex, Russia still claims world-class status in specialized chemicals, laser technology, nuclear science, and high-energy materials.[22] New allocations may serve to revive further the VPK, which comprises more than 2,000 plants and R&D centers. Yeltsin's appointment of Zinovii Pak as the new chairman of the State Committee for Defense Industries suggests that the advanced weapons program will be carried out under the state defense order. At the Security Council meeting mentioned above, Yeltsin also ordered his intelligence chiefs to close the technology gap with the West by improving their industrial espionage.

Another substantial measure of assistance for the VPK and the military resulted from Yeltsin's decision to reduce by 20 percent the amount of machinery and equipment placed in storage for the outbreak of war. These mobilization supplies are valued at 10 percent of the country's entire industrial establishment and should supply the military with all needs "from underwear to munitions."[23] This appears to be the first time that such mobilization supplies have been opened since the demise of the Soviet Union.

Russian Plans

Funds for the Ministry of Defense budget are being kept at the lowest possible level, to the detriment of the regular armed forces. But funding for new weapons systems, as contained in a state defense order, is on the rise. Such an order was signed by Yeltsin on December 27, 1995. If funding continues to grow at the current rate (from 8 to 17 to 54 trillion rubles between 1994 and 1996), there should be little doubt that the armed forces will succeed in modernizing their equipment and weapons systems.

According to January 1995 testimony before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee by the acting director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Admiral William Studeman, preparations for nuclear war with the United States appear to remain a high Russian priority. A new underground command-and-control center was being constructed under Mount Kosminskii in the Urals. Also in January 1995, the then director of the Defense Intelligence Agency

[21] "VPK na meli ne ostanetsia" (VPK will not collapse), *Izvestiia,* Feb. 3, 1996.

[22] El'mar Murtazeev, "Gosduma predlagaet . . . subsidirovat' vysokie tekhnologii" (The State Duma proposes . . . to subsidize high technology), *Segodnia,* July 5, 1995.

[23] Iurii Godotiuk, "Boris El'tsin predlagaet sokratit' mobilizatsionnye moshchnosti" (Boris Yeltsin proposes to reduce mobilization preparedness), *Segodnia,* Feb. 17, 1996.

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testified before another Senate committee that this bunker facility is financed by "large investments in [Russia's] deep underground program."[24]

One year later, in his world assessment, the new CIA director stated before the same U.S. Senate committee:

> We can not forget, however, that Russia still possesses a formidable nuclear arsenal. Moscow maintains high levels of readiness throughout its strategic forces, and it continues modernization programs, including a follow-on missile for the SS-25 ICBM.[25]

The SS-25 modification (Topol M-2), with a single warhead carried by a new three-stage, solid-fuel ICBM, has been flight tested several times and is scheduled for series production during 1996. It can be deployed in a silo (for counterforce) or made mobile (for a second strike). The START I Treaty permits the modernization of such missiles, so long as overall reductions are met within the seven years between December 1991 and the end of 1998. Russian claims that Moscow was outmaneuvered in the START II talks suggest that Kremlin ratification of the treaty may never take place.[26]

Most likely, a classified part of the state defense order pertains to financing the production of miniature nuclear weapons. Aleksei Iablokov, chairman of the Security Council's environmental safety commission, testified at parliamentary hearings that such ammunition weighs 30 to 40 kilograms. A spokesman for the Ministry of Defense responded that the minimum weight of such warheads is 90 kilograms, thus acknowledging their existence. Allegedly, they are stored under a strict protection regime, with only a limited number of people having access. This miniature nuclear ammunition is "one of the shields for Russia's security, and this is known throughout the world."[27]

A military buildup is also occurring in the conventional-arms arena. The T-90 main battle tank has made its debut, with 107 already stationed in the Far East. If funding is available, all earlier models will be replaced by the end of 1997. This fighting machine has a new generation of explosive, reactive armor fitted to the hull and turret. It will serve as the basic heavy tank for the armed forces through the year 2005 and perhaps beyond.

A new tactical missile for the ground forces has also been tested. It is highly accurate and will become the Russian military's sole mobile rocket system. Allegedly, it does not violate the 1987 intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) agreement. That would mean the new rocket carries nuclear warheads over a

[24] Lieutenant General James R. Clapper, Jr., "The World-Wide Threat to the United States," Testimony before the Select Committee on Intelligence, U.S. Senate, Jan. 10, 1995, p. 5.

[25] John Deutch, "World Wide Assessment Brief," Testimony before the Select Committee on Intelligence, U.S. Senate, Feb. 22, 1996, p. 6.

[26] Aleksandr Dolinin, "Ne pytaites' rubit' 'Topolia'" (Do not attempt to cut 'Topol'), *Krasnaia zvezda,* Aug. 5, 1995; Ovinnikov, "Bezopasnost' Rossii—na kriticheskoi grani."

[27] "Official Confirms Security of Miniature Nuclear Weapons," Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Central Eurasia* (hereafter FBIS, *CEura*), Nov. 22, 1995, p. 35, from ITAR-TASS (Moscow), Nov. 21, 1995.

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Table 2
Projected Composition of the Russian Navy in 2000

Basic Ship Class	Total	Alert Status
strategic submarines	20	10
attack submarines	55	32
diesel-powered submarines	39	16
aircraft carriers	1	1
cruisers, destroyers, and anti-submarine warfare ships	39	12
frigates and coast guard cutters	51	13
amphibious-landing ships	18	3
mine sweepers	30	14
In all classes	253	101

Source: Gennadii V. Voronin, "Razval korablestroeniia—gibel' flota" (Collapse of shipbuilding—destruction of the fleet), *Morskoi sbornik*, July 1995, p. 12. Voronin is deputy chairman in charge of naval construction for the State Committee for Defense Sectors of Industry.

distance shorter than the limits imposed by the INF agreement, that is, under 500 kilometers (for a rocket capable of carrying a nuclear warhead).[28]

Although the navy seems to have abandoned construction of aircraft carriers, the giant nuclear-powered cruiser *Pëtr Velikii* (Peter the Great) sailed from the Baltic shipyard to its temporary base at Kronshtadt last fall. Possessed of guided missiles, it is reputed to have been built specifically as a destroyer of enemy carriers and has been assigned to the Pacific Fleet. Construction of this 28,000-ton warship took more than eight years.[29]

Before the end of last year, some 140 nuclear-powered submarines had been decommissioned, though 50 of them still contain nuclear fuel. Despite that, 7 new and quieter Severodvinsk-class submarines are being built to supplement 13 of the Akula class, the most modern of Russia's ballistic missile–equipped submarines. One analyst predicts a total of 75 nuclear-powered and 39 diesel-powered submarines in Russia's navy by the year 2000. (See Table 2.)

[28] "Tactical Missile Test Launched in Leningrad Region," FBIS, *CEura*, Feb. 5, 1996, pp. 49–50, from Moscow TV, Feb. 2, 1996.

[29] Rear Admiral (ret.) Georgii Kostev, "Ot 'Lenina' do 'Pëtra Velikogo'" (From the "Lenin" to "Peter the Great"), *Krasnaia zvezda*, Jan. 13, 1996.

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The air force, because of its increasingly obsolescent weaponry, plans to introduce a new tactical-strike aircraft (the Su-27IB), with advanced reconnaissance and electronic warfare capabilities; a multi-rocket tactical fighter, the Mikoyan MFI (1-42), with new generations of air-to-air and air-to-surface armaments; the Kamov-52 (Black Shark) combat helicopter, already being produced; the medium-range Su-T-60S "stealth" bomber to replace the Tu-22M (Backfire); the Iliushin-106 to replace the Il-76 (Candide) jet transport for airlift; and the MiG-31M (Foxhound B) for air defense.[30]

Installation of approximately 8,000 highly accurate new-generation cruise missiles with regular anti-air units would help solve the problem of air defense. However, during the past two years funding has been available to purchase only single prototypes of such new technology, according to the commander of air and missile defense.[31]

It would appear that modernization of nuclear weapons is already being implemented, with the latest Topol M-2 ICBM and its D-31 SLBM counterpart. The number of advanced nuclear-powered submarines planned for the year 2000 suggests that this leg of the triad will remain a continuing and potent threat vis-à-vis the West. Development of new tactical missiles and production of miniature nuclear weapons can also be seen as part of the INOBIS design for the future.

Conclusions

Since the INOBIS study seems likely to become part of Russia's new long-range national security doctrine, regardless of who wins the June 1996 presidential elections, the United States must anticipate implementation of its guidelines by preparing contingency plans.

For example, if Moscow refuses to abide by IMF and World Bank requirements, that should automatically make Russia ineligible for future international loans and trigger cancellation of the most recent (1996) loan of $10.2 billion.

If Moscow continues to insist that the Caspian Sea is a lake—though it is bordered by Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Iran—and that Western companies should therefore be prevented from investing in its exploitation, other sanctions might be applied. And a ruling by the International Court of Justice might be solicited regarding the status of the Caspian Sea. Washington should make clear that preventing the Turks from having closer territorial links with the Azeris violates the sovereignty of both countries.

If Moscow appears to be bent on restoring its empire, then NATO should grant membership to the Baltic states. This accession to NATO could

[30] Piotr Butowski, "Russia's air force looks beyond 2000," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Jan. 17, 1996, pp. 29–30.

[31] Colonel General Viktor A. Prudnikov, "Vozdushno-kosmicheskaia oborona" (Air and space defense), *Armeiskii sbornik*, Apr. 1995, p. 7.

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be preceded by joint military maneuvers with West European and American units, leaving a residual brigade to act as a tripwire, much as the token British-French-American troops in West Berlin did during the cold war. The Russians might hesitate before killing NATO soldiers, especially if the latter were not armed with tactical nuclear weapons.

Nuclear and missile technologies have already been sold by Moscow to Teheran and Baghdad, without any U.S. sanctions being invoked. Russia's plans to sell Iran $1 billion worth of goods during 1996 (85 percent in defense supplies) may be increased to $5 billion annually by the year 2005.[32] Under these circumstances, the United States would be justified in penalizing Russia for breaking the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as well as the Missile Technology Control Regime. If Moscow begins to position its forces and tactical nuclear weapons on Iranian territory, where they could control the Persian Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz, such a move would represent a threat to U.S. vital interests. That fact should be announced in no uncertain terms and in advance of any Russian troop movements.

Lastly, if the Russians repudiate or violate the START I agreement, Washington will have a legal basis for giving Moscow six-months notice that the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty will not be renewed when it comes up for review in 1997. In the meantime, preparations to deploy a nationwide ABM system should be expedited as protection from aerospace attack by any country, including Russia. According to the old Roman maxim, *si vis pacem para bellum!*

[32] "Government to Increase Defense Supplies to Iran," FBIS, *CEura*, Feb. 15, 1996, p. 14, from INTERFAX, Feb. 14, 1996.

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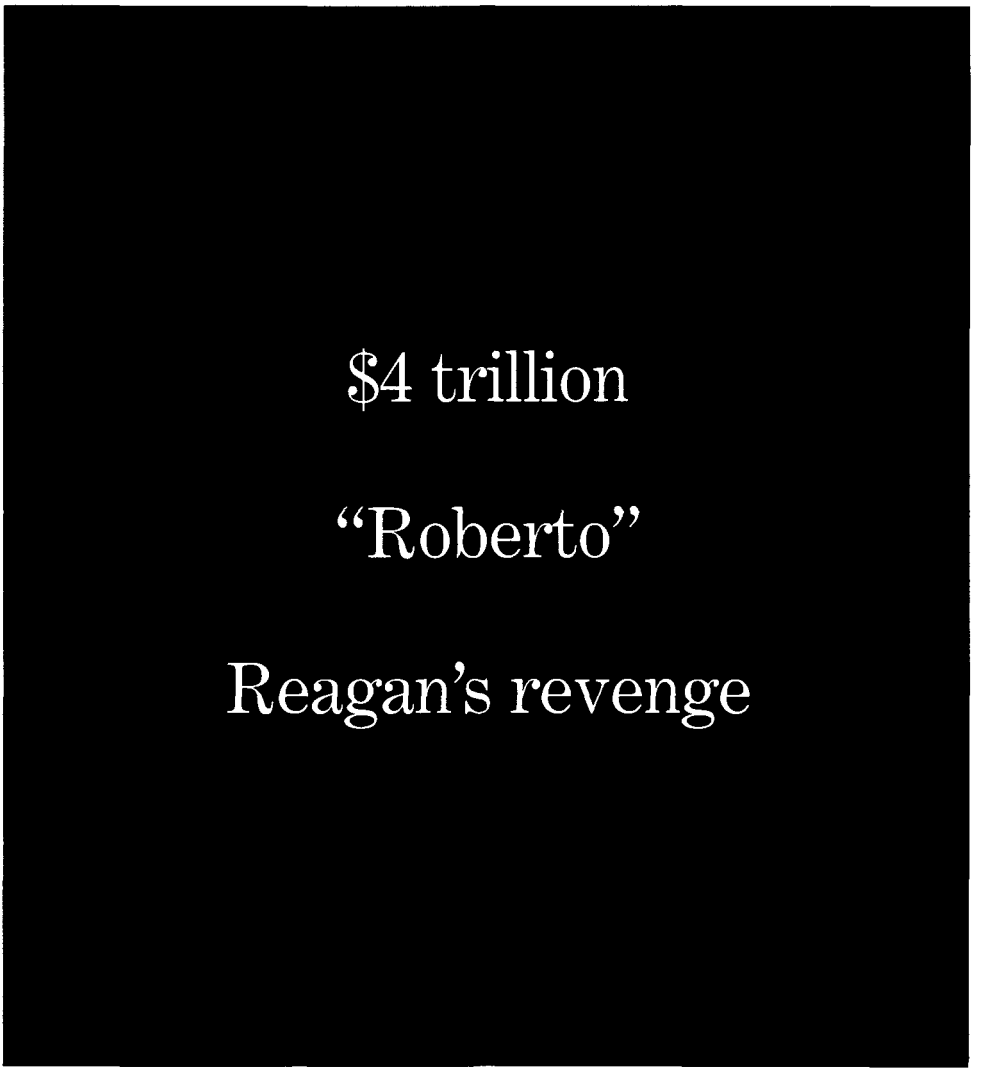

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Beyond the Unipolar Moment

A Sober Survey of the Islamic World

by Ira M. Lapidus

Islam inspires fear and fascination in the Western imagination. It calls to mind puritanical holy warriors, fanatics, dervishes, suicide bombers, hijackers, and human waves thrown into battle. The strange fulminations of a Khomeini, Qaddafi, or Saddam Hussein about martyrdom and death to the enemies of Islam help to sustain these images. An equal fascination with the condition of women under Islam, and indignation over (and prurient interest in) the submission of women, engages the West. According to the *Wall Street Journal,* tales from the harem, Islamic bodice rippers, are among today's best sellers.[1] What is more, journalists and scholars constantly remind us of the historic "clash of civilizations" between Islam and the West. Political interest groups—the governments of Israel, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, and others wanting American support—propagandize about the Islamic danger. In a January edition of the *New York Times,* Elaine Sciolino wrote not about Islam, but about the debate over the menace of Islam.[2] In short, Islam has become more than a political problem: it borders on an obsession.

Much of the recent scholarly literature, on which this article is based, presents a more sober and sophisticated point of view about Islam. The information and perspectives set forth in this literature can help us get past the hype and achieve a better sense of proportion about Islamic issues.

What the Islamic Problem Is Not

First, not everything that happens in Muslim countries can be attributed to Islam, any more than all Western behavior is necessarily due to Christianity.

[1] Amy Dockser Marcus, "These Potboilers Stir Widespread Interest In 'Islamic Affairs,'" *Wall Street Journal,* Dec. 22, 1995.

[2] Elaine Sciolino, "Seeing Green; The Red Menace Is Gone. But Here's Islam," *New York Times,* Jan. 21, 1996.

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Islam, like Christianity, is not a single doctrine with a single message, but a family of religious views. Muslims adhere to it by choosing different aspects or by ignoring its teachings altogether even as they express allegiance to it.[3] Apart from the movements we shall consider here, there is also a modern, liberal form of Islam.[4]

Nor, properly speaking, are all the diplomatic tensions between Western and Muslim countries a product of some Islamic problem. We have good relations with many conservative, but strongly Islamic, states such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Pakistan. To be sure, we are troubled by the absence of democratic values and democratic political processes in these countries, but not by their religious orientation. We have conflicts with Iran and Libya, but were these conflicts to be resolved we would not have any interest in the religious convictions of their populations. We do have, with friends and foes alike, conflicting national interests, but issues of territorial influence, nuclear proliferation and arms control, and the oil economy are problems of international relations, not religious conflict.

Nor—contrary to the view of alarmists—is there a universal, monolithic movement of Muslims bent on jihad and determined to destroy the West. While some Muslim states, such as Iran, may be hostile to American, European, or Israeli interests, most Muslim countries are cooperative allies of the West. While there are international networks of terrorists or political groups hostile to Western interests, these networks are very limited; they are commonly sponsored by national states such as Iran, Syria, or Libya, and they are as much competitive with one another as they are involved in anti-Western activities. Nor does the arc of crisis (as Zbigniew Brzezinski dubbed it), extending from southern Europe through the Middle East to Central Asia, define an Islamic outburst, but rather a region plagued by assorted, disparate problems.[5]

To the extent an Islamic problem exists in the American point of view, therefore, it derives from a specific phenomenon: the activist Islamic political movements.

The Activist Movements

These are the movements commonly called fundamentalist or revivalist and, as I shall call them, Islamist movements. They include the Society of Muslim Brothers and the Jama'at in Egypt; Al-Nahda in Tunisia; the FIS (Front Islamique du Salut—Islamic Salvation Front) in Algeria; the Jama'at-i Islami in Pakistan

[3] For an introduction to Muslim beliefs and practices, see Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Islamic Society in Practice* (Gainsville: University Press of Florida, 1994).

[4] See Mohammed Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994).

[5] For balanced considerations of these issues, see Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser, *A Sense of Siege: The Geopolitics of Islam and the West* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995); and John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

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and elsewhere in South and Southeast Asia; Shi'i movements in Lebanon, such as Amal and Hizbullah; and many others.

The Islamists believe that Islam provides a total system of beliefs and a model for a holy society and government. They see Islam as a comprehensive alternative to capitalism, communism, democracy, and other Western ideological systems, and to the existing regimes in Muslim countries. They are opposed to political elites (whom they regard as corrupt and exploitative), narrowly based military and family cliques, landlord coteries, oil-based economic elites in cahoots with local political leaders and Western capitalists, and a decadent Western culture steeped in sexual license and materialism. They believe that corrupt regimes and foreign influences breed injustice in their societies, undermine the natural order of the relations of men and women, and thus subvert the family and promote immorality. They have both a political and a religious solution to the problems of their societies: overthrow corrupt governments, expel foreign influences, and educate and elevate their own people through religious commitment.

They divide, however, over how to achieve a truly Islamic society. Moderate Islamists favor preaching, education, communal activities, and worship to build an Islamic society from the bottom up, so that the masses of Muslims will spontaneously reject corruption and evil. They want to persuade and pressure the political leaders to enforce Islamic discipline. Radicals favor immediate, violent revolution.

An Islamist Revival

Islamic history has witnessed repeated reform movements whose adherents re-dedicate themselves to bringing the principles of the Koran truly into practice and establishing a community life that imitates the time of the Prophet. Islam, like Christianity, is a religion that generates in believers a strong impulse to establish justice in the world in accord with God's teachings. The contemporary movements were created in the 1920s and 1930s by two principal figures, Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt, and Abu Ala Mawdudi, the founder of the Jama'at-i Islami in Pakistan. Both organizations spawned branches in other countries in the 1940s and after. The Muslim Brothers in Egypt were suppressed by the regime of Gamal Abdel Nasser in the 1950s. The Jama'at-i Islami, however, continued to be an active movement and had an important influence on Zia al-Haq in the 1980s.

The 1970s and 1980s brought a revival of the Society of Muslim Brothers and the creation of a new generation of activist Islamic movements. The revival was due in part to the teaching of Sayyid Qutb, an Egyptian Muslim Brother who was imprisoned and executed by the Nasser regime. Sayyid Qutb supplied the revival with its Muslim intellectual and historical rationale.[6] The failure of

[6] See Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi', *Intellectual Origins of Islamic Resurgence in the Modern Arab World* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

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the Arab states to defeat Israel helped to generate a sense of need for a spiritual and political revival to strengthen the hand of the Palestinians. The oil embargo lent confidence to Muslims in their newfound strength, while the Iranian revolution seemed to show that such movements had mass appeal. These and other factors encouraged the further spread of a neo-Islamist ethos. But the factors differed in each country for various local reasons—the Islamic movements are basically national movements.

Nevertheless, the national movements have some features in common. They are a reaction against the states that became independent after World War II. With some exceptions, these states have failed in the mission to develop their societies. Unresponsive, repressive governments—often run by small cliques of insiders, such as the military regimes of Algeria, Iraq, and Syria or the family regimes of the Arabian peninsula—are widely hated insofar as they benefit only a handful of people. Merchants, traders, and businessmen excluded from prosperity because they do not belong to the right circles; Arabophones blocked from worthwhile careers in government by Francophone elites; professionals without opportunities to exercise their skills; and the masses of lower-class migrants from the countryside who find the desired advantages of the cities already monopolized by previously established residents—all such groups have reason to oppose the existing regimes. Extreme poverty, or at best a grossly unbalanced distribution of income, and a lack of educational and occupational opportunities have embittered large numbers of people. The breakdown of village, religious, and family institutions under the press of urbanization has intensified popular malaise. As people face new consumer-oriented and materialistic lifestyles, mass entertainment, and the social and sexual freedoms of the city, they desire but at the same time loath these goods. They fear the dangers of materialism and libertinism; they sense impending moral collapse; and above all, they must cope anew with the changing relations of men and women, and the weakening of family authority over children.

Insofar as many of these states have at one time or another called themselves socialist, all forms of leftism have been discredited as ideological alternatives. Insofar as these states have received external support from the West, the disadvantaged are hostile to foreign influence. In societies where neither the rhetoric of democracy nor of class competition nor of human rights belongs to the traditional vocabulary, the only way to appeal to a higher morality is in the name of Islam.[7]

Organization

The key to understanding the strengths and weaknesses, the potentials and limitations of the Islamist movements is their organizational structures.

[7] For a consideration of Islam and human-rights issues, see Ann E. Mayer, *Islam and Human Rights* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995).

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Islamist movements are commonly coalitions of chieftains and their followers or of quasi-independent units within the framework of a larger movement.

At their core, the Islamist movements are religious communities organized for worship and discussion meetings. They sponsor social clubs, debating societies, lecture series, sports clubs, co-ops, schools, clinics, workshops and small industries, and professional associations. Schools and colleges that integrate elements of a modern education, especially science, with religious learning are particularly important. They train new militants who combine Islamic commitments and technical training. The Islamist movements also work to integrate uprooted migrants from the countryside into an urban environment, provide neighborhood organization and social services, support indigent families, assist students, and represent these groups to the authorities. They are widely important as a force for creating a coherent, viable community life. Affiliated with and attached to the broader movements are political and military units. Small, militant, often violent, conspiratorial groups abound within, on the fringe of, and outside of the main movements.

The consequence of this structure is a considerable diversity of interests, orientations, and activities within the Islamist framework. That allows for tactical flexibility and shifts of emphasis among peaceful and violent strategies, but also makes possible great contradictions and conflicts.

The Leaders and the Followers

The activists and leadership of the Islamist movements commonly come from the milieux of students, college graduates, teachers, intellectuals, and would-be intellectuals. A surprising number come from technical schools and science faculties. In Algeria, they are commonly the graduates of Arabic colleges who lose out to the Francophone graduates of the university. They often have no career prospects in industry, state, or government service and are obliged to earn a living from trades and casual jobs, or to emigrate in search of work.[8]

The prime sources of support for the Islamist movements are similarly students, young intellectuals, or educated people without serious career prospects. Young men and women from rural areas, who move to the big cities to attend the universities and colleges but do not have prospects commensurate with their education and reasonable ambitions, and even lack prospects of marriage until their late twenties or thirties, are the shock troops of the Islamist movements. Merchants, small manufacturers, shop keepers, and trade- and crafts-people in the local economy—outside of the government and international economies—are another common source of leadership and support. They are backed by masses of migrants from rural areas who are uprooted and have lost family, village, and communal ties.

[8] See, for example, John Ruedy, *Islam and Secularism in North Africa* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

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The Vision

Politics. The leaders' idealized Islamic society is never described in concrete detail, but what Islamists have in mind is a society similar to that of large-scale movements such as the Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt. The Islamist party is the Islamic state in embryo, comprising as it does a supreme head, advisory councils, an administrative apparatus, women's auxiliaries, paramilitary forces, and corporate units to enroll peasants, workers, students, or professionals. The leader is often a charismatic figure who rules by his virtue and personality. His political activism makes him the likely ruler. He might be selected by an advisory council of the community, but more likely he will have emerged as the head of the organized political party or militant revolutionary cell.

Economics. In the economic sphere, the Islamists are divided. The "Left" favors state-directed economic development and has a social-democratic orientation that recognizes the right to private property but calls upon the state to regulate the accumulation of wealth and to redistribute it in the interests of the masses of the people. The conservatives stress the right of private property and the right to profit from individual enterprise. Islamic banking is not a policy issue but rather a technical means of conforming to the ideal that interest is forbidden to Muslims. Instead of paying fixed interest on deposits, Islamic banks treat depositors as shareholders in joint ventures and distribute a portion of profit and loss. Since this type of investment mechanism is almost universally available under other names, Islamic banks could be considered a marketing device to secure the deposits of a certain category of customers.

Ethos. Islamist movements tend to be comprehensive and to proffer solutions to all problems at once. They want to change the political regime, recreate communities, restore morality, revive spiritual values, and reject corrupting foreign influences. All problems are thus solved by restoring the true teachings of Islam and winning the hearts of individuals to the practice of Islam.

The Islamists stress that it is essential to establish the Shari'a, the Muslim holy law, as the law of an Islamic state, yet it is not clear how the law would be applied in detail or indeed whether the law would actually be enforced, apart from some symbolic gestures. The reason for this lack of clarity is that the ultimate goal of these movements is not strictly speaking political, but rather the establishment of a society of the virtuous who internalize the principles of an Islamic way of life. For the most extreme, political action is not just a means to destroy old elites and seize political power, but a mystical, utopian demonstration of the depth of one's true faith. Islamic warriors, therefore, commonly stress the obligation of jihad, which redeems whether or not it is successful. Suicide missions and the quest for martyrdom, much to the horror of the West, are paths to individual salvation on the part of romantic devotees of violence.

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A Return to the Middle Ages?

Despite the frequent comment that Islamic religious revival movements are a return to the past, and despite their own religious and exhortatory rhetoric about the Koran and the principles of the Prophet, it is a mistake to call these movements reactionary. For the religious ideas espoused by the Islamists are not traditional at all. Typically, the leadership of these movements are not the *ulama,* the historic learned elite, but a new intelligentsia of preachers, community organizers, intellectuals, and missionaries. They have largely given up the legal regulations and traditional theology and philosophy associated with classical Islam. They replace traditional cultural practices and knowledge with a modern, almost Protestant-like inner commitment to the fundamentals of the faith. This new Islam emerges from the hearts of the believers. The contemporary stress upon political solidarity, political goals, and political symbols is also a new version of Islam, and not typical of the historical discourses.

Thus, the Islamist movements are a response to the problems of adapting a traditional culture and traditional values to modernity. They are an effort to find a legitimate basis for the construction of a modern state and economy in light of contemporary technology and science. For good reason, they appeal to technical and professional students, bureaucrats, engineers, medical personnel, skilled workers, and others who have some contemporary education. The people attracted to these movements, and the strata of society that support them, are typically the product of modern national states, national educational systems, and partially modernized economies. In *The Failure of Political Islam,* Olivier Roy writes, "Rather than a reaction against the modernization of Muslim societies, Islamism is a product of it."[9] Hence, modernity does not necessarily imply secularism, liberalism, or democracy but spawns both secularism and religious revival, just as it inspires political orientations ranging from fascism on the right to communism on the left.

Islamist Successes and Failures

Serious case studies of recent Islamist movements provide a much-needed perspective on the impact, potential, and limitations of these movements. The greatest success, for instance, is the Iranian revolution, which not only established a radical clerical regime but also inspired renewed Islamic activism in many parts of the world. Iran remains the Muslim state most hostile to American interests and to Israel. Yet the Iranian revolution is a very special case and has not been replicated elsewhere. Unique factors in the revolution included the nationwide organization of the *ulama,* and the respect accorded the city of Qum as a capital of Muslim learning and the ayatollahs, including Khomeini, as the authoritative interpreters of Islam. The organized clergy, with

[9] Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 50.

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other allies, was able to mobilize nationwide mass support to overthrow the shah. In no other Muslim country is the clergy so well organized and capable of concerted action.[10]

Within Iran itself, the impact of the revolution has been limited. Fifteen years afterward, the Islamic revolution has not challenged the institutions of the nation-state, nor has Iran accepted the Shari'a as the automatic law of the land. The 1989 constitution reduced the power of the clergy and returned power to the president, the ministers, and the bureaucracy, though a religious scholar remains in charge of the legal system. Islam has had no influence on the economy, the distribution of wealth, welfare, housing, or other domestic policy issues. There has, of course, been a strong Islamic influence on the legal system, the schools, the media, and in public policy toward women, but these features do not define the system as a whole. In foreign policy, Iran pursues its state interests, albeit often in Islamic guise. The revolution has not really effected more radical changes than have been achieved by public opinion alone in other Muslim countries.[11]

In Sunni countries, Islamist movements have had a less significant impact. Sudan is perhaps the most important case of a radical Islamist movement in control of a Sunni-populated national state. In Sudan, the Islamist state seeks not only to enforce Islamic law but to impose it on the whole of the country. It wages a genocidal war against the non-Muslim peoples of the south. It also supports radical Islamist movements in other countries.

Turkey is another country in which the Islamist movement is growing in political strength. The Welfare Party (Refah Partisi)—so named to get around Turkish laws forbidding religious parties—emerged from recent elections as the single strongest party, with about 20 percent of the national vote, complicating the efforts of other Turkish parties to form a secular coalition government. The Welfare Party tends to represent provincial, small-town, and migrant populations. Local successes in previous elections have given it control of many municipal governments, and the party has achieved a reputation for efficient and honest administration. It criticizes the Ankara government for corruption and mismanagement, high inflation, and widespread poverty. It implicitly supports a peaceful solution of the Kurdish problem through decentralization. Its foreign-policy rhetoric is anti-Western, anti-NATO, and anti-Israel, and has opposed Turkey's entry into the European Union (although since the elections, party leaders have said that they would not necessarily withdraw from the union).

Among Islamist movements, the Turkish Welfare Party is noteworthy because its route to political power is electoral and democratic. It is bound to have a major impact on Turkish policy, but not necessarily a radical one. The party may well reinforce trends toward closer cooperation and commercial ties with Middle Eastern, Central Asian, and other Muslim countries, but how far it

[10] See Nikki R. Keddie, *Iran and the Muslim World* (New York: New York University Press, 1995).
[11] See Homa Omid, *Islam and the Post-Revolutionary State in Iran* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

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would go in changing Turkey's pro-Western orientation is hard to judge in light of the strong pro-Western sentiments of the army and rival parties.

The critical case of Islamist radical politics is now Hamas, which has waged a campaign of suicidal terrorism against Israel resulting in numerous Israeli deaths in the past year—three score in a few weeks of January and February 1996 alone. Politically, the Hamas campaign to undermine the peace accords between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel has several dimensions. First, Hamas wants to harm its enemy, Israel. Secondly, it would like to push Israeli public opinion into opposition to the peace accords. Thirdly, it hopes to force Israel to take harsh measures against the Palestinians, embitter them, and undermine Palestinian engagement in the peace process. Last but not least, Hamas wants to subvert Yassir Arafat and the PLO and bring an Islamist movement to power. The struggle against Israel and the struggle to convert Palestinians to an Islamist state and society are thoroughly intertwined.

The critical case of Islamist radical politics is now Hamas.

How effective are terrorist tactics in this case? They are powerful, but possibly not decisive, for the recent terrorist actions come at a time when peace forces are being strengthened in both camps. Arafat has consolidated his power in recent elections with 85 percent of the vote in his favor, and Palestinian public opinion increasingly accepts the inevitability of a compromise arrangement with Israel. The tragic murder of Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has similarly strengthened the hand of peace forces in Israel. In fact, observers have noted a new tone in Israeli public opinion: alongside the grief, outrage, and demand for a crackdown against Hamas is a tacit conviction that the existence of Israel is no longer in question. While Shimon Peres adopted strong measures to try to crush Hamas—including intense pressure on Arafat to arrest Hamas leaders and break up its terrorist units, direct Israeli punishment of terrorists and their families, and a sealing off of the Palestinian population—extreme measures have been avoided. For instance, there has been no move to reoccupy the West Bank, and much debate over how far Israeli countermeasures can go without reversing the peace process. Among Palestinians, there is widespread recognition that Hamas has gone too far. Arafat has been forced to take the strongest measures yet against Hamas. Internationally, there are efforts to isolate the radicals diplomatically and politically, and to reinforce the struggle against terrorism. These political efforts are intended to isolate Hamas rather than allow it to polarize Israelis and Palestinians.

Hamas has one asset in this struggle—its ability to create havoc and mayhem. This capacity for violence is almost impossible to crush entirely from the outside. So long as numerous Palestinians live impoverished lives in the refugee camps, so long as youths can be moved to suicide, and so long as Hamas splinters into ever more elusive factions, terrorism will be difficult to eradicate completely. Still, Hamas does not have a free hand. It is intricately bound up with Palestinian society, and while that affords it some protection, it also makes Hamas responsive to Palestinian opinion. The group's branches engage in social work and community building, and its leaders are willing to

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participate in the Palestinian political system if allowed a chance to compete. Even the militants are factionalized. In the recent crisis, Hamas "moderate" militants agreed to a cease-fire, while more extreme elements refused. For many branches of Hamas, accommodation with Arafat, and therefore with Israel, may be the only way to realize the moral, communal, and domestic political goals of the Islamist movement.

The key issue in coping with terrorism, then, is the struggle for control of public opinion in Israel and among the Palestinians. Repressive actions must be combined with political gestures and compromises to reduce the appeal of those who preach violence.

However, in most cases it appears that the militant Islamist movements have not been able to set the political agenda and have so far been blocked or beaten back. Though the religio-communal wings of the movements continue to make headway, political Islam is in many places in retreat.[12] Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan, for instance, attempt to out-flank Islamist opposition by identifying Islam with the state or the monarchs. Other states have brought Muslim clergy under government control. In Senegal, for example, there are close cooperative ties between the religious leaders and the state elites, and Islamist opposition movements are minimal.[13] Egypt, Yemen, and Algeria have sponsored Islamic discourse in the media, re-Islamized the law, and taken a more conservative approach toward women. They seek to preempt the Islamist movements for control of popular sentiment, often coupling Islamic rhetoric with repression of Islamist movements.

Apart from Sudan, nowhere in the Sunni world has an Islamist movement come to power. In Iraq and Syria, they have been completely defeated and forced underground. The Egyptian government has largely, but not entirely, crushed violent Islamist action and has tightened control over the political system by eliminating the opposition groups from parliament. The Muslim Brothers especially have suffered from the crackdown. In Algeria, the military government held elections and won a majority, after which the hitherto united Muslim front cracked, with some elements speaking of a modus vivendi with the government. The Tunisian government remains well entrenched, though it has had to incarcerate thousands of Islamist activists. Jordan has opened its parliament to Muslim parties and co-opted them. Successive elections show a decline of support for Muslim parties.

In Afghanistan, fragmentation and competition among the Islamic groups have so far kept them from coming to power. Here, Islamism is neither cohesive nor a modern ideology to reform the state, but rather a rationalization for "tribal" and factional competition for power. Likewise, in Tadjikistan, Islamic discourse is enlisted on behalf of rival tribes, factions, clienteles, and bandits engaged in gun and drug running. (The Shi'i movements in Lebanon, however, do seem to repudiate parochial loyalties in favor of broader identities. Amal in particular

[12] See Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*.

[13] See Leonardo A. Villalón, *Islamic Society and State Power in Senegal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

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serves as an organizing force for immigrant, urbanized, no longer traditional-minded Shi'is who look to clerical leadership to bring them into national politics.) In sum, Islamist movements have not demonstrated a convincing capacity for mass politics, except among the Shi'i populations of Iran and Lebanon.

Furthermore, they suffer from a number of limitations as national opposition movements. Islamist movements are commonly unable to chart a decisive course of action. They have a broad base of support but encounter difficulty in mobilizing it for mass politics. Islamist movements commonly suffer from a lack of unity and tend to be made of disparate small groups alongside larger parties. Egypt, for example, has a large Society of Muslim Brothers but many smaller Islamist societies alongside of it. Algeria's FIS is a coalition. The Palestinians are divided among Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and other, smaller factions. Splits between the militant and the pacifist elements readily emerge. Should they attempt to win over society by peaceful, educational means or by violent revolution?

In many cases, the militant branches of the Islamist movements have so alienated potential supporters that even though much of the public may in principle favor an Islamic state, it is reluctant to see a militant, puritanical Islamist movement in power. Islamist parties face other limitations as they try to win mass support. The Jama'at-i Islami in Pakistan, for instance, is one of the most influential of the Islamist movements and in the 1980s persuaded the Zia regime to declare Pakistan an Islamic state. Nonetheless, in Pakistani elections the party has not been able to win substantial support. Having declared Pakistan an Islamic state, the government encouraged all and sundry Islamic groups to enter politics. The Islamist vote was thus splintered among different groups to the detriment of the Jama'at-i Islami. Furthermore, political competition brought out an insuperable contradiction between a holy community and a political party. The Jama'at was led to make electoral compromises that split the leadership and redounded ultimately to its discredit. The elections also revealed the elitism of the movement. It is a "top down" reforming party that has little attachment to the masses and little capacity to mobilize them under an Islamic banner. Thus, democracy may in fact be dangerous for Islamist movements.[14]

International Organizations

The international components of the Islamist movements are difficult to assess. While several neo-Islamist movements, such as the Society of Muslim Brothers and the Jama'at-i Islami, have branches in many different countries, the branches are independent.[15] They do not have a common policy and respond in different ways to local situations. The central organizations are just

[14] See Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

[15] See Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*.

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ideological propaganda networks, and perhaps a source of funds, but lack a hierarchy for command and control. It is symptomatic that in the former Soviet Union there is no supranational Muslim authority at all, but only national and local movements. The other principal international movements—the Bureau of Islamic Propaganda in Qum, the World Muslim League in Jedda, and the Arab Islamic People's Conference of Khartoum—are creatures of particular states. The Bureau of Islamic Propaganda is aimed primarily at Shi'is. The World Muslim League is the vehicle of Saudi interests. Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Sudan have also sponsored a variety of terrorist groups with different ideological colors. These groups are not especially aimed at enemies in the West but compete with one another for influence in the Muslim world. The Saudi-sponsored groups and the Society of Muslim Brothers often collaborate in opposition to Iranian-sponsored Shi'i movements. In general, Sunni hostility to Shi'ism is rising, and Sunni states such as Kuwait, Iraq, and Pakistan repress Shi'i populations.

The Sunni movements have complex relations, too. While the Saudis and the Muslim Brothers are united in supporting Islamic groups in Afghanistan, Algeria, and elsewhere, they are also rivals. During the war in the Persian Gulf, what Islamic solidarity had been achieved collapsed as most Islamist movements deserted the Saudis. Islamism—understood as Third World opposition to neo-colonialism—won out over Saudi patronage and Sunni religious ties. The several international Muslim movements, therefore, do not represent a united Muslim political front.

Compared with these larger entities, the terrorist groups have an ephemeral and changing identity that belies the notion of a united Muslim movement. The radical, violent groups tend to be small, sectarian, and increasingly mere mercenaries of Syria, Libya, or Iran. (Hizbullah, familiar because of its repeated attacks on Israelis, is an exception in that it is a movement with considerable popular support.) They are certainly dangerous, as evidenced by the attacks on Israelis, and by their appearance in hot spots throughout the Muslim world and occasional bombings in Europe and the United States. The war in Afghanistan especially seems to have created a pool of footloose Muslim warriors spoiling for chances to kill, maim, and destroy property. They are, however, relatively small players on the international scene and thus far do not seem a major threat to the stability of states and societies outside the Muslim world. Above all, their choice of terrorist tactics is a confession of weakness rather than an expression of strength. The small Middle Eastern states that sponsor terrorist groups do not have the capacity to challenge their Western enemies directly. That is not to belittle their potential for horrible deeds, but so far they have not demonstrated a capacity for large-scale political organization.

Conclusion

Roy's *The Failure of Political Islam* concludes that Islam is *not* an effective geo-strategic force: "It will neither unify the Muslim world nor change the balance of power in the Middle East."[16] It has failed conceptually as well as

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strategically, for it has no policy alternatives on the economic level and no new model of state and society. In Iran, it has left basic institutions unchanged. In Soviet Central Asia and Afghanistan, it reinforces tribal, patron-client, and gang structures rather than generating new integrating institutions. In international terms, militant political groups and terrorists are an expression of internal Muslim world rivalries more than a coherent threat to the outside world.

However, while the activist political movements fail, the moderate forms of "fundamentalism," the movements of moral commitment and social reform, continue to thrive. In fact, they grow increasingly important in Muslim countries as the vogue for Islamic piety spreads from youth to parents, and from the lower and middle classes to the upper echelons of society. Even apart from organized Islamist groups, there is widespread interest in the non-political forms of Islam. Prayer, the fast of Ramadan, attendance at Sufi mystics' ceremonies, pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina, reading about the teachings and history of Islam, and listening to recitations of the Koran and to popular preachers at mosques and on tapes and television are all increasingly important activities. Islam also provides the basis for personal and communal identity, and a sense of self-esteem that derives from confidence in religious truths. In Egypt and many other Muslim countries, charitable associations flourish. It is Islam practiced in the ordinary ways that makes it, like religion everywhere, important as the mainstay of a meaningful and worthwhile life.[17]

Yet, the very strength of Islamism seems to generate a corresponding weakness: it is a purely moralistic culture, built around a limited repertoire of verbal symbols, and has not produced its own art and cultural forms. To be sure, it is hostile to popular-culture entertainments and leisure activities—movies, cafes, Coca-Cola, jeans, rock, jazz, couples strolling together—but to the extent that people reject such puritanism, they find further Americanization the only cultural alternative. Indeed, the real contest between Islam and the West may ultimately not be political but cultural, and the greatest dangers may be the ones faced by Muslim peoples threatened with the loss of their historical identities.

In any case, the Islamic revival reminds us that the forces that have stimulated Islamist movements remain powerful. The protest of youth against failed modernization, of the disenfranchised against narrow political regimes, of the unemployed against poverty, and of the poorly educated against cultural deprivation will most likely continue. Forced into identity politics, even encouraged by Muslim governments who see it as a benign and acceptable alternative, Islamism remains a reservoir of potentially violent as well as moral and religious opposition to Middle Eastern states, the elites who run them, and their Western allies.

[16] Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam,* p. 194.

[17] For the discourse of Muslim preachers in Egypt, see Patrick D. Gaffney, *The Prophet's Pulpit: Islamic Teaching in Contemporary Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

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To cope with these movements we cannot merely deplore, hate, or fear them. We must understand what they are trying to say and the conditions that gave rise to them. While the strengths and dangers of these movements can easily be overestimated, and frequently are, their seriousness and unsettling long-term potential cannot be ignored.

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Beyond the Unipolar Moment

Why the United States Must Remain Engaged

by Larry Diamond

The 1990s are a fertile, formative period for world politics and American foreign policy. With the collapse of the Soviet empire and the end of the cold war, bipolar global competition is over, the Soviet threat to Western Europe has ended, and Marxist revolutionary movements have almost evaporated in this hemisphere and everywhere else. Russia has become much weaker, but also more unstable. Europe is enlarging and further integrating. Japan is questioning its orientation toward the West in general and its security pact with the United States in particular. China is rapidly emerging as the dominant power in East Asia. Iran and Iraq both continue to aspire to dominance in the Persian Gulf, threatening their richer and less populous neighbors.

The world has been transformed constitutionally as well. Democracy, at least in form, has spread to virtually every region in the world. In formal terms and, by a somewhat smaller count, substantive terms, there are more democracies in the world than ever before, and fewer viable, competing alternative forms of government. Yet at least two rival models or belief systems—those of the Islamic state and of an illiberal East Asian semidemocracy—do mount vigorous challenges to the supposed indiscipline and moral decadence of a materialist, liberal West. Most of all, nationalism and ethnic chauvinism have swept across terrains vacated by ideology, spawning horrible outbreaks of violence in Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia. A half century after the world resolved "never again" to allow it, genocide has been brazenly practiced in full and nearly instantaneous view of the international community, and on some of the very same European soil that the Nazis sought to "cleanse."

This bewildering new environment holds uncertain implications for the United States. Are we more secure today, now that Soviet expansionism and the Soviet nuclear threat have appeared to retreat? Or are we less secure, now that post-Soviet nuclear materials are much more vulnerable to theft or diversion, and various rogue states and terrorist groups are in hot pursuit of weapons of mass destruction? Should the end of the cold war relieve the United States of the need to balance and defend against global threats to the freedom and

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security of our allies, or is the stabilizing presence of the lone remaining military superpower needed in a new but no less urgent way to deter the temptations of many more potential aggressors in this volatile, multipolar era? Most basically, what are American interests in this new era, and what resources can we afford to expend on behalf of them, given the protracted budget deficits and massive unmet domestic needs that gnaw away at American power?

Across the spectrum of American thought and opinion—from Left, Right, and Center; from scholars, policy wonks, and talk-show hosts—one detects a growing sentiment for America to turn inward after the cold war. This mighty river of intellectual and public opinion has many conflicting currents—some neo-isolationists favor (more or less) free trade and foreign aid, while others would abandon liberal internationalism entirely. Some think America's international strategic engagement has always been a mistake, while others believe we are in a new era when America can be "a normal nation in normal times."

The neo-isolationists want to bring all U.S. troops home from abroad.

However, most neo-isolationists share a certain alluring common core of views. With the cold war over, they argue, so should be our global responsibilities as a superpower. Bring *all* our troops home. Let Europeans, Japanese, and Koreans defend themselves and their sea lanes. Slash defense spending in half (or more) and use the savings to reduce the deficit or meet domestic needs. Come home, America!

Although most presidential candidates in both parties remain internationalist, neo-isolationist sentiment will likely be potent throughout 1996 and beyond for several reasons. The conflict in the former Yugoslavia, whether it is "settled" or not, will continue to frustrate the American public, which, increasingly, seems willing to tolerate the use of American force abroad only if it can prevail quickly and overwhelmingly, as in Grenada, Panama, and the war in the Persian Gulf. Our trade deficit continues to grow, and because of the severe economic recession in Mexico, NAFTA has not yet boosted American exports to the degree it surely will in the long run. More generally, the rapid globalization of manufacturing and services has made employment more unstable and earnings more dependent on knowledge and skill in all the industrialized democracies. The resulting economic anxiety and inequality are easily mobilized by protectionist populists, Left, Right, and Center.

At the level of serious policy debate, momentum for a new isolationism may also gather from the intellectual power and appeal of Eric Nordlinger's new book, *Isolationism Reconfigured: American Foreign Policy for a New Century*.[1] Nordlinger, a widely respected political-science professor at Brown University who died in 1994, presents a cogent and thought-provoking case for a radical scaling-back of American military commitments and engagements around the world. He would slash the defense budget in half, terminate our

[1] See Eric A. Nordlinger, *Isolationism Reconfigured: American Foreign Policy for a New Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

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security alliances, bring our armed forces home from their bases overseas, and establish a narrow security perimeter for U.S. military engagement that extends beyond our borders only to the rest of North America, the Caribbean, and the protection of our air and sea lanes. He quotes no less a strategic internationalist than Dwight Eisenhower to remind us that our global military engagement carries real costs to our national welfare in higher budget deficits and reduced social spending. However, his security vision is classically isolationist in its distaste for foreign military engagements and entanglements.

But at the same time, Nordlinger's vision resonates with important themes of liberal internationalism. His "reconfigured" isolationism would include "moderately activist" economic and political engagement around the world on behalf of our liberal ideals. Indeed, precisely by disengaging from military commitments beyond our vital security perimeter, Nordlinger believes the United States would be free to act more consistently and effectively abroad on behalf of its economic interests as well as its ideals of democracy, human rights, economic freedom, peace, non-aggression, and humanitarian relief in catastrophes. He recognizes the important contributions to these goals that can be made by resourceful and creative diplomacy, economic assistance, and political assistance such as that provided by the National Endowment for Democracy. Breaking sharply with American isolationist traditions (especially the right-wing variety crudely exemplified by Patrick J. Buchanan), he appreciates the growing utility of multilateral cooperation in pursuit of these goals through organizations like the United Nations, NATO, and the Organization of American States.

Clearly, that is a fresh approach to the issue of America's proper role in the world, blending elements of isolationism, internationalism, and pacifism. One is even tempted to call it "liberal isolationism." Beyond its bold and iconoclastic conceptual rethinking, the book itself is impressively learned, energetically researched, and forcefully argued. It will demand a serious hearing, and hopefully it will stimulate the critical debate that is needed.

Nordlinger's combination of radical military downsizing and internationalist engagement on economic, political, and humanitarian fronts will appeal to many Americans, but it rests on a number of dubious or problematic assumptions that are common to most isolationist perspectives (though rarely so well and clearly argued). Four such assumptions stand out:

> 1) He argues that the United States is "strategically immune" from external danger, that we are, in his analytic breakdown, insulated, invulnerable, impermeable, and impervious. In essence, our geographic location and military power are so overwhelmingly favorable that no attempt at force improvement or territorial extension by any potentially hostile power would succeed if it threatened our security, or would threaten our security if it succeeded.

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> 2) U.S. military commitments abroad have allowed our allies to free-ride under our security umbrella. If we withdrew, they would be forced to assume a fair share of their own security burden and to form among themselves the necessary alliances to ward off threats.
>
> 3) We cannot know in advance the intentions of our potential or presumed adversaries. These intentions may well be benign with respect to our own security. Furthermore, the cost in unnecessary conflict and violence of misjudging such intentions as threatening will be greater than any gain from correctly perceiving and deterring an actual threat. Thus, we are better off not engaging our adversaries at all strategically.
>
> 4) In the unlikely event that a proven adversary should threaten our security interests, our overwhelming power and strategic immunity still give us the ability to take effective, unilateral military action to defend our interests.

With one important exception (mentioned below), the assertion of U.S. strategic immunity is compelling for today, even if one finds it unconvincing (as I do) when applied retrospectively to the case for not engaging Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan before World War II, or the Soviet Union afterward. If one defines our vital security interests as narrowly as Nordlinger does, we would indeed appear to be immune from serious threat. But what are our vital national interests in the post–cold war world? *We* may be immune, but South Korea is not, Taiwan is not, and Israel is not. These countries—and in recent history other free states—face serious military threats that they have to date successfully deterred or repelled only with American security assistance and explicit or implicit security guarantees.

Is it in our vital national interest to assure the immunity of these countries from aggression, intimidation, and conquest? Isolationists like Nordlinger say no. But two other standards demand consideration. Since the Monroe Doctrine, Woodrow Wilson, and especially World War II, the United States has made certain commitments to support freedom and self-determination in this or that part of the world. Clearly, we now lack the national will and capacity to broaden our commitments unilaterally. But neither should we restrict them so radically that the United States no longer honors its moral commitment to support free peoples who share our values, and to seek a world order in which all countries may live securely in their borders, free from external aggression and intimidation.

There is also a strategic case to be made. For while the stability and security of many countries in the world may not have an impact on our vital interests, instability and conflict originating within non-strategic countries may quickly spill over into countries that *do* matter greatly to us. In any case, unchecked aggression in one region emboldens rising aggressive powers

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elsewhere and invites further conquest and intimidation. Existing balances of power can then become destabilized, and wider, more destructive conflict more likely. In particular, to abandon commitments we have made for decades to countries like Israel, South Korea, and Taiwan (as to Western Europe when it was threatened) would send a dangerous signal to aggressive dictatorships around the world. These three democracies (and others like them) might be able to defend themselves without U.S. assistance, but why risk the trauma of renewed war and possible defeat by terminating security relationships that have effectively deterred aggression? And why encourage the expansionism, conflict, and anarchy that would surely result if the United States announced flatly that it would no longer meet force with force? Even in the wake of the moral and geopolitical calamity in the former Yugoslavia, the United States—and, more broadly, the Western alliance embodied in NATO—still makes the Saddam Husseins of the world think twice about the costs of naked aggression. That restraint on global misbehavior should not be surrendered gratuitously.

Nevertheless, that is what Nordlinger proposes to do. Believing the costs of this diffuse military deterrence too great for the United States, he offers two alternatives. One is to use other, non-military weapons in our arsenal—diplomatic pressure and especially economic sanctions—against troublemakers. But, as we know, it takes a high degree of allied solidarity and target-country vulnerability for economic sanctions to be effective, and a brutal regime with little moral or political reason to worry about the nation's welfare can resist them for a long time. Already in the new world order we have seen in Iraq, Haiti, and Serbia what a weak, turgid instrument sanctions are.

In the end, aggressive, expansionist, and repressive dictatorships are mainly deterred or removed by the use or threat of force. To believe differently is historically myopic and naïve. To the extent we want to change the behavior of regimes with sanctions, we need to develop better ways to target regime leaders without cruelly, and usually pointlessly, punishing a population that is innocent of its leader's crimes. Financial and travel sanctions targeting regime elites (as in Haiti) hold some promise, but that requires much sharper financial intelligence and major changes in the international banking system. These means should be pursued, but they will never induce quick and dramatic change in a regime's behavior in the way, for instance, a cruise missile aimed at a dictator's palace can.

As for provoking our allies to pick up the burden and coalesce, certainly we need to pursue more-equitable burden sharing. And to some extent (especially in the war in the Persian Gulf), we have done so. But there are three serious problems with the confident assumption that our allies can and will fill the gaps we leave. First, they may judge that, absent a significant U.S. security presence, they lack the collective power to balance and deter a rising regional power. Thus, they may consider the only realistic course to be to fall into its power orbit, to capitulate preemptively and join its bandwagon. Secondly, enough countries in a region may judge capitulation cheaper and easier than resistance, so that the others have no choice but to fall in line. As Samuel Huntington has suggested, the prospect of East Asian countries, from Japan to Thailand,

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responding to China in this way is very real, and it will increase significantly if the United States withdraws as a balancing force. The same can be said with respect to Iran and its smaller Gulf neighbors.

Thirdly, we should always beware of what we wish for—it may come true. For instance, the time may be at hand to assign a much more active security role to a Germany that has long since candidly acknowledged its war crimes and become a leading force for European integration. Certainly Europe can and should shoulder more of the military and financial burden of defending itself, its sea lanes, and its interests in the Middle East. But do we really want to encourage the active remilitarization of a Japan that has yet to come to grips with its own war guilt, and in which assertive nationalism is on the rise? A continued American security partnership with Japan, as part of our strategic engagement in Northeast Asia, seems a better and safer bet for peace and stability.

Nordlinger makes much of the impossibility of discerning in advance the intentions of a potential adversary. He asserts that what we often presume to have been successful deterrence was really a "costly waste." But what are the costs of failing to deter a challenger who turns out to have aggressive intent? We must weigh these costs not only in a particular instance, but cumulatively over time, as the stabilizing influence of American strategic engagement disappears and rising regional powers—or even declining powers with no other way to rescue their regime legitimacy—begin to muscle about their weaker neighbors at will. We cannot reliably know the intentions of rival leaders because often these leaders themselves are unsure of their intentions. They may arm, intimidate, and probe, looking for opportunities to expand their power. And the less democratic they are, the more they can arm, strategize, and plan for aggrandizement in secret.

In the contemporary era of instant media, smaller families, prickly publics, and unprecedented international economic integration, war is much more costly and politically risky for the governments of liberal democracies, especially those more economically advanced. In particular, established liberal democracies will not commit aggression against other countries to expand their territory and aggrandize their power. While transitional regimes and illiberal electoral regimes offer some dangers, threats to regional order and world peace emanate primarily from closed and undemocratic political regimes—such as China, North Korea, Iran, Iraq, and potentially, if things go the wrong way, a nationalist (or nationalist-communist) dictatorship in Russia. When such regimes rapidly build up their military arms, the prudent course is to monitor, to offer to negotiate, but to prepare for the worst with credible military deterrence. In all of these regions, effective deterrence (or defense) will require American strategic engagement for some years to come.

This brings us to Nordlinger's final problematic premise: that if distant security problems should somehow get out of hand and penetrate the narrow perimeter of our security interests, we will still be powerful enough, even with a military half the size of today's, to handle them adequately and even unilaterally. I am deeply skeptical of this scenario's viability, particularly if we want to retain

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the overwhelming military superiority that brings rapid victory at relatively low cost and thus deters foolish transgressions.

Nordlinger does not advocate, nor can we seriously imagine, that the United States will retreat into pure isolationism and neutrality. Even in his more plausible reconfiguration, we will continue to be engaged around the world and take sides on moral, political, and economic grounds. We will still be the richest and most powerful nation in the world. Thus, we will remain a prime target for the envies, resentments, grievances, and retaliations of militant movements, enraged zealots, and calculating dictatorships. But to be engaged in all the ways Nordlinger wants, while lacking the capacity to project military power rapidly, forcefully, and, if necessary, in more than one place, would be dangerous, even irresponsible. It would, in fact, invite *more* military challenges to U.S. interests, not fewer.

It is in U.S. security interests to remain globally powerful and engaged.

I am all for moving toward multilateral means to deter and repel aggression and other unlawful international behavior, but the United Nations, as currently constituted, has proved inadequate to the task, and NATO's geographic scope, even if it expands (as it should) to Eastern Europe and the Persian Gulf, will remain limited. Elsewhere, especially in Asia, if dangerous power vacuums are to be avoided, the United States will need to remain engaged with something like the current panoply of alliances and cooperative alignments until new, broader arrangements emerge.

In the past, global power has been an important reason why certain countries have become models for emulation by others. The global power of the United States, and of its Western democratic allies, has been a factor in the diffusion of democracy around the world, and certainly is crucial to our ability to help popular, legitimate democratic forces deter armed threats to their overthrow, or to return to power (as in Haiti) when they have been overthrown. Given the linkages among democracy, peace, and human rights—as well as the recent finding of Professor Adam Przeworski (New York University) that democracy is more likely to survive in a country when it is more widely present in the region—we should not surrender our capacity to diffuse and defend democracy. It is not only intrinsic to our ideals but important to our national security that we remain globally powerful and engaged—and that a dictatorship does not rise to hegemonic power within any major region.

Lastly, we should not be so blithe as to assume that the United States really is "strategically immune" from serious harm. There is one flaw in this logic, and it is potentially big enough to result in millions of American casualties, on American soil. That derives not from the threat of nuclear attack by a hostile state—presumably that can be deterred—but from the growing danger of nuclear terrorism. For the next decade or two, that may well be the greatest direct threat to American security, and it will not dissipate simply because we detach ourselves from our present security involvements overseas. Rather, it will increase.

Even if deterrence theorists are correct that the proliferation of nuclear weapons will lead to greater deterrence of formal interstate conflict, the risks of accidents, thefts, and the shrouded sponsorship of terrorism will rise. Continued

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U.S. strategic engagement will be needed to monitor suspect weapons programs by irresponsible states, to interrupt their development, and to destroy them preemptively if necessary. That could become a dangerous, high-stakes game, and if we are going to play it, we had better have the military power to win. In contrast, if we mean to tolerate the emergence of a number of new nuclear powers (many of them rogue states), then we might do well to withdraw into a much more thorough shell of neutrality and timidity than Nordlinger advocates, lest we risk offending any group with the money, ideology, friends, or savvy to acquire the ultimate terrorist weapon.

In one of his most trenchant critiques, Nordlinger warns that the United States cannot be effective in promoting democracy abroad if it subverts freedom, constitutionalism, and the rule of law at home. He demonstrates how our obsession with strategic threats and engagements—especially during wartime—has repeatedly led to abuses of our constitution, our laws, and our liberal ideals of political and social tolerance by government officials (not least presidents) who felt their secretive and illegal actions were justified by "national security." One need not favor constraining presidential authority in foreign policy nearly so radically as Nordlinger does to accept his principled arguments that executive foreign-policy makers should be accountable before the people, the Congress, and the law.

Yet it is foolish to blame our strategic engagement abroad for the abuse of constitutional authority. No doubt if we had no military alliances, no enemies, and no wars, presidents would have far fewer reasons to violate liberal political principles for reasons of "national security." (I say "far fewer" because, like almost all neo-isolationists, Nordlinger does not advocate complete disarmament, and he recognizes the need for an effective, albeit much more limited, U.S. security perimeter.) But that is tantamount to a person remaining housebound for fear of catching pneumonia. The question is, do we want to live as a nation like Howard Hughes?

The challenge is to design rules and institutions that minimize the danger of abuse, and then to place in public office people who will make those institutions work. As the founders of our republic recognized, the price of democracy is eternal vigilance. Even with the best institutions—and the 1973 War Powers Resolution is an example of institutional progress toward righting the balance in foreign affairs—occasional abuses of power and attendant cover-ups will occur, and not just because of unreasonable fears over national security. The answer is to address the problem, and not to throw out the baby with the bath water.

Much in Nordlinger's book is wise, prudent, and morally responsible. Let us hope that we never again so demonize a global challenger that our officials are tempted to vitiate our constitution and values, or make the mistake, so tragically common in the cold war, of embracing any ethically repugnant regime that happens to be on "our side." Let us have a serious debate on our national interests and the military means we need to defend them. If we can pare our defense spending further by eliminating expensive weapons programs that are not needed or not likely to work (or even in some cases not wanted

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by the armed forces themselves), by all means let us do so. But let us not make the mistake—the core mistake of isolationists then and now—of assuming that a world without effective rules and the power to enforce them would be any more benign than Hobbes imagined it would be, or that a world full of escalating rivalries, arms buildups, aggression, repression, genocide, and war would not ultimately threaten our values, our security, and our way of life. Especially now, in a turbulent era of power instabilities and rapidly resurgent nationalisms, world order will depend heavily on preeminent American military power, selectively but strategically engaged around the world in the service of liberal principles. In the necessary task of reconfiguring U.S. foreign policy for a new century, liberal internationalism offers the best, wisest, most secure, and most humane foundation on which to build.

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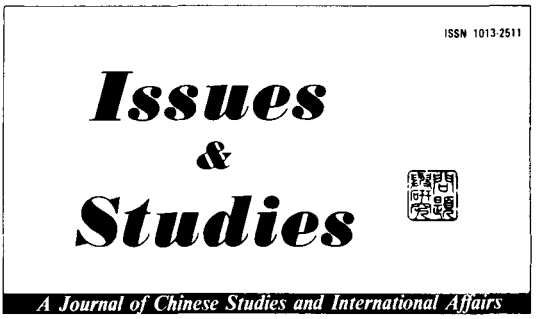

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Documentation

Is "the West" Religious or Secular?

by David R. Gress

> We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations and ages.
>
> Edmund Burke

The 1790s were a time of war in Europe. The French Revolution's message of equality, democracy, and national community as the source of progress and happiness clashed with the forces of reaction. Observing this scene and thinking back to earlier wars, the German poet Klopstock confessed that "before, most hateful of all horrors to me was murderous struggle over the right path to everlasting joy. Now I am filled with equal dismay at every life taken, every breath failing in battle over how to be happy on this side of the grave."[1]

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Europeans fought their most bitter struggles "over the right path to everlasting joy." These wars of religion were waged by men who had no doubt that their world, which we call the West, was and should be filled with faith.[2] The problem was that they could not agree what that faith should be, and because the stakes were literally cosmic, neither side could yield.

[1] Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, quoted in Heinrich Lutz, *Das Ringen um Deutsche Einheit und kirchliche Erneuerung*, Propyläen Geschichte Deutschlands, vol. 4 (Berlin: Propyläen, 1988), p. 469.

[2] This statement casts doubt on one of the very few points of agreement among conservative, liberal, and radical historians of Europe in the past two centuries, namely, that the century of the European Wars of Religion (1550–1650), culminating in the Thirty Years' War, should be understood as an era of political, dynastic, social, ideological, or possibly class conflict, exacerbated by resource shortages and the so-called Little Ice Age. Religion was the excuse, not the real reason, for conflict. See, for example, Christopher Hill, *A Century of Revolutions* (New York: Norton, 1966); Henry Kamen, *The Iron Century* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971); Theodore K. Rabb, *The Search for Stability in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975); and the best recent synthesis of scholarship in Geoffrey Parker, *The Thirty Years' War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). None of these approaches is false; but are they sufficient?

David R. Gress is a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute and directs its History Academy. This text is adapted from a speech delivered at the institute on March 12, 1996.

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The age of Enlightenment, in which Klopstock lived, considered itself to have risen far above such primitive notions. The idea of killing and dying for a particular interpretation of Christianity seemed absurd to educated people. Their West was secular in its public, political manifestation. Religion was, or should become, a private matter. Klopstock himself composed an epic in twenty books on the biblical story of Jesus Christ; he also sympathized with the French Revolution, though, as the poem I quoted shows, he deplored attempts to impose its political doctrines by force. In the century and a half since he died in 1804, his warning went unheeded. Europeans, and others, found great meaning in killing and dying for political ideologies.

At two centuries' distance from the first great modern wars of ideology, and at the end of a century characterized more than anything else by ideological conflict, we approach the question of the character of the West a little fearful of categorical answers. The answer I propose to the question "Is the West religious or secular?" is paradoxical and comes in three parts: The West most of us support and cherish—the West of political freedom, productive economies, technical and scientific skills, and personal autonomy—is, at first glance, secular. But this secular veneer is fragile. It depends for its health and survival on religious roots. The West is a symbiosis of religion and secularity. And, thirdly, if religion withers, the result is not the health, but the perversion of secularity. A life without faith is not a life of reason, but of superstition. As the Romans said, if you want evidence, look around you.

Another way of phrasing my answer is to say that I agree with the political scientist and biographer of Tocqueville, Larry Siedentop, that "the fates of the Enlightenment and Christianity are bound up together." Siedentop makes this proposition after noting that "the Enlightenment project survives best in the United States" and asking if it is therefore "accidental that the United States is also the Western country where Christianity itself remains most deeply rooted." Having made this connection between the Enlightenment and Christianity, however, Siedentop proceeds to confuse the two, thereby falling into one of the errors I warn against below. According to him, the symbiosis of a moderate Enlightenment and a modernized Christianity is a progressive, melioristic liberal outlook, one that seeks to "influence political and social outcomes" in the name of a vaguely religious humanitarianism, or a "social gospel."[3]

Such a humanitarianism is not a symbiosis of religion and secularity, but secularity with a religious veneer. Its temptation is to hide its political and economic agenda under a moralistic veneer. It is an example of the type of ideology one can expect when neither religion nor secularity is any longer autonomous. The result of such confusion is not the best of both, but the worst

[3] Larry Siedentop, "The Western Malaise: Attacks on the Enlightenment from within and without," review of *On the Eve of the Millennium*, by Conor Cruise O'Brien, *Times Literary Supplement*, Mar. 15, 1996, pp. 3–4. Siedentop's book, *Tocqueville*, in the Oxford Past Masters series, was published in 1994.

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of both. The fates of the Enlightenment and Christianity are indeed bound up together, but their mutual survival depends on each of them remaining distinct.

In these remarks, I want first to justify asking whether the West is religious or secular, and then to justify the answer I have provided. An objection to asking it might be that it is superfluous, irrelevant, or antiquated. Superfluous, first, because plenty of good answers exist. Back in the 1930s and 1940s, for example, lots of wise and learned people provided answers to our question—Arnold Toynbee, Christopher Dawson, Denis de Rougemont, to name just three.[4] Another kind of answer was provided by the innumerable Western civilization courses taught in American colleges from the 1920s through the 1960s. Some of those answers were both thoughtful and persuasive, but those days are long gone and I believe the time has come to look at the question again. The reason the question has returned to our agenda is really the reverse of the reason that it largely disappeared from view in the four decades or so after 1945—namely, that during the cold war, or better, during the era of the U.S.-Soviet conflict, the West was pretty easy to define: it was the governments and nations of what we used to call the Western alliance, NATO. This handy, practical, and self-evident definition in terms of strategy, geography, and daily politics made it unnecessary to look for deeper answers. In particular, it came to seem quaint, if not anachronistic, to ask the question I am asking now.

Today, the Soviet Union is no more; the Western alliance is no longer the democratic counterpart to a totalitarian empire. The political and strategic definition of the West was always, in my view, inadequate and is less adequate than ever in the 1990s. The question whether the West is best understood and best interpreted as a religious or a secular culture is, again, important. One reason it is important is that many people have clear ideas about whether the West *should be* secular, religious, or—as we have seen—humanitarian. There are plenty who want to make their answers binding on us all. The fundamental point of these remarks is to show how such people misunderstand the character of the West and how their misunderstandings threaten to undermine what they propose to defend.

Some would say, second, that the question whether the West is religious or secular is irrelevant because all you can really ask is whether the West, as you would like it to be, *should be* religious or secular. Once we pose the question this way we find ourselves immediately on familiar terrain in American political debate, on the terrain marked out by the attacks I have mentioned—the struggles between those two groups labeled by their respective opponents as "the religious Right" and the "secular humanists," a.k.a. "liberals." This terrain is one arena, and I would argue the most crucial arena, of the "culture wars."

[4] See Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History,* especially vols. 7–11 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946–58) (The later Toynbee succumbed massively to the humanitarian ideology lauded by Siedentop.); Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture,* Gifford Lectures of 1948–49 (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1950); and Denis de Rougemont, *Love in the Western World* (1938; Harper Torchbooks, 1972). Rougemont's book is the most pertinent in this context, particularly his fundamental assertion that the essence of the West is to seek "the particular" and thus to emphasize distinctions, tensions, and polarities.

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I am unfairly leaving aside the cases—not so few, actually—of religious conservatives who are politically liberal, and of liberals who profess religious faith. Leaving those aside, then, we have two groupings with incompatible agendas for American life and public policy, as illustrated by the fights over abortion, over prayer in public schools, over education in general, over popular culture, over the role of government in protecting or not protecting traditional families, over welfare, and, indeed, over the proper goals and methods of American policy in all areas, foreign as well as domestic.

The struggle in this country between the religious Right and secular liberals is a struggle about what America, and by extension modern society, the contemporary and future West, should be, not about what it is. In asking whether the West here and now, the "really existing West," you might say, is a religious or a secular civilization, I am not taking sides in that contemporary struggle. I want, rather, to distinguish the "is" question from the "ought" question because I think the "is" question has an answer that can help us deal, politically as well as intellectually, with the "ought" question.

The third type of objection, that the question is antiquated, comes for example from the political scientist James Kurth. In a recent essay, he wrote of these same two groups, religious conservatives and secular liberals, that neither was really Western. Religious conservatives, said Kurth, want to turn the clock back and make the West pre-modern; liberals who oppose them want to fast-forward the clock and make the West postmodern. Neither, he said, were interested in preserving the West as it was; both in fact were anti-Western.[5]

What he meant was that both groups would like to seize political power and to impose their agenda by legislation, indoctrination, and social control, so that the whole country would gradually take on the habits, beliefs, and desires of the winning group. So far, neither side has won decisively, and the culture wars continue, in which Supreme Court decisions on abortion and school prayer, political events such as the religious Right's appearance at the 1992 Republican Convention, and the rise of political correctness in academic life mark the crucial episodes.

Kurth says that neither the religious Right nor the postmodern Left is really Western, whereas I say that the struggle between these two sides is over what the West should be, and people generally do not fight over stakes that do not concern them. This seeming paradox goes straight to the root of our question. The explanation is that Kurth, and many with him, define the West as a balance between tradition and change, between religion and secular culture, between inherited ways of life and radical innovation, whether it be in family forms, in education, in economics, in social policy, or in foreign policy. The point about this definition of the West is that it is, or at least seems to be, primarily negative: The West is not Christianity, but neither is it totally irreligious. The West is not traditional and conservative, but neither does it seek change

[5] James Kurth, "The *Real* Clash," *The National Interest,* Fall 1994, pp. 3–15.

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for its own sake. The West is neither wildly individualistic nor stiflingly communitarian. And so on. These negative definitions are what is left in the 1990s of what I call the "old liberal story" of the West, the story told in those "Plato to NATO" college courses in Western civilization popular in the early postwar decades.

The old liberal story worked well enough to underpin the NATO definition of the West but has now become inadequate. First of all, few people accept it. Second, it leaves out precisely the forces fighting today to define the West, and third, the negative definition never did fully describe the West, and less so today than during the East-West conflict.

What do I then mean by saying that the West seems secular and is religious, and that these two aspects need each other—that if either decays, the other decays also? I am up against a very respectable body of opinion here, namely, all those who see in the growth of secular politics and in the decline of Christianity a great liberation from superstition and bigotry. I am up against all those who see in the religion of the West, which in practice means Christianity, a constraint on the human spirit and an arbitrary limitation of its freedom and its potential—and who conversely see in liberal secular principles the best and only way to secure that freedom.

To put it at its most general, I am up against all those, starting with Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who see liberation as the goal of human history and human social evolution. The West, they say, is freedom, whether economic, political, aesthetic, moral, or personal. Religion, by contrast, they see as the source of evil, of intolerance and superstition. Michel Serres, a French philosopher who teaches part of each year at Stanford, believes—at least sometimes—that the only moral choice for the West is to return to paganism.[6] The slogan of these followers of the radical Enlightenment is that famous line of Lucretius: *tantum religio potuit suadere malorum,* which means, paraphrased, that "religious belief has made people do any number of evil things," but which can also be read as claiming that "only religion is the cause of evil behavior."

Now, the radical Enlightenment was not wholly wrong. Freedom is indeed the essence of the modern West, but freedom is not a single thing or a single way of being. Some kinds of freedom are incompatible with others. Answering the question Is the West religious or secular? may help us see how.

I want now to proceed by way of three, or maybe four, paradoxes that appear when one examines contemporary answers to our question. Through them, I hope to show more fully what I mean by saying that the West is both secular and religious, and that emphasizing one over the other harms the balance and undermines the essence of the West.

[6] Michel Serres, quoted in Simon Critchley, "Angel in Disguise: Michel Serres's attempt to re-enchant the world," review of *Conversations on Science, Culture, and Time,* by Michel Serres and Bruno Latour, trans. Roxanne Lapidus, *Times Literary Supplement,* Jan. 19, 1996, pp. 3–4. But, according to the same review, Serres also agrees with Dostoyevsky that belief in a unique, incarnate God is an essential barrier against "the war of all against all."

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The first paradox is that most people within the West define it as secular, but this is not so outside the West. Particularly it is not so among Muslims, especially those who do not live in the West but in *dar-al-Islam,* in countries where Islam is the ruling or the majority religion. The Italian historian Franco Cardini has put this well:

> For Muslims, the West and Christianity are one and the same thing. Secularization, which we consider to be complete or at least well advanced in our own world and desirable in theirs, is unknown or misunderstood. Western choices, both moral and political, are seen as the corollary or consequence of the Christian substance of the West. If that substance gives signs of atheism or of permissiveness, the reason, to Muslims, is not that Christianity has lost ground, but rather that Christianity itself, a revealed but imperfect religion founded on Scriptures in which [according to Muslims] God's original word has become degraded, carries in itself the seeds of atheism and corruption.[7]

In other words, Muslim observers answer yes to the question whether the West is religious. Since they do not like much of what they see in the West, they deduce that the religion itself is rotten, not that the West has become less religious. When religious people in the West answer that permissiveness and other features of Western culture are not in fact intrinsic to Christianity but have grown as religion has declined, Muslims, as Cardini says, ignore or discount this answer as hypocritical. To them, it cannot be a coincidence that the society that harbors Christianity is also the most anarchic, permissive, and libertarian.

There are profound reasons within Islam itself for this paradoxical identification of the modern West with Christianity. Perhaps the most critical is that Islam does not recognize a distinction basic in modern Judaism and Christianity, that between God and Scripture. The Koran is not just the Word of God—it is the uncreated and immediate Word of God, which had and needs no human intermediary. Muhammad did not write the Koran; he merely copied it at God's dictation, or, in some versions, received the original copy directly from the hands of an angel. To a Muslim, it makes perfect sense that a Scripture composed by fallible men, even under divine guidance, would be intrinsically prone to error and, when applied in society, must lead to corruption.

The Muslim view that civilization and religion are basically the same thing, so that the faults of the civilization are necessarily the faults of the religion, has cropped up recently in a different context. I am speaking here of Samuel Huntington's argument from 1993 that the future of world politics will consist of clashes between civilizations, with the West pitted against Islam, Hinduism, Confucianism, or all three.[8] Huntington has received much criticism for this argument. Critics pointed out that Huntington's definition of a civilization was vague, and, more important, that there was something inconsistent, paradoxical even, about positing a clash between one civilization—Islam—based on religion,

[7] Franco Cardini, *Noi e l'islam—un incontro possibile?* (Rome: Laterza, 1994), p. 98.

[8] Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs,* Summer 1993, pp. 22–49. Huntington's book based on this essay and the debate it provoked is scheduled to appear in late 1996.

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where religious faith was the primary mobilizing factor, and another—the West—characterized by economic, political, and social pluralism, and in which people would presumably be mobilized, if at all, by a variety of desires. That is an important point, but what I want to notice here is that even though Huntington was careful to note that the West is not defined by any religion, he nevertheless assumed enough coherence, loyalty, and mobilizing power in the West to make it an identifiable and powerful factor in world politics.

If such a West exists, and James Kurth for one doubts it, then it is defined not by religion, as the Muslim critics say, or not by religion alone. Let me quote Cardini again:

> Muslim circles sensible to confrontation with the West do not distinguish that issue from that of a confrontation with Christianity. To them, the two issues are the same, whereas for Westerners, whether Christian or not, they cannot fail to be quite distinct. It follows that for example the Western Catholic who is such not just in name but in practice, that is, one who believes and practices according to the liturgical and sacramental discipline of his Church, ends up facing a continual dilemma. . . . To what degree will he feel closer to an atheistic or agnostic Westerner on the basis of common Western values . . . and to what degree will he feel closer to a Muslim faithful to his religion in the name of the God of Abraham?[9]

That is indeed a critical question, which raises the prospect that any true dialogue of religions should be not among Christians, Jews, and Muslims, but should include a fourth party, that of secular modernity.

My second paradox concerns precisely this secular modernity. If Muslim observers see the West as Christian and, therefore, see Christianity as responsible for what they regard as the corruption and impiety of the West, other observers, both inside and outside the West, see it as a purely modern, secular, liberal civilization. Religion, in this view, is at best a distraction, because it involves emotions and can cause civil strife, and at worst an obstacle to liberation and autonomy.

The paradox here lies in the way these observers overestimate the secular and especially the rational character of the West. Their view seems to be that the future of the world is one of reason, peace, and prosperity, that these three things are found primarily in the West, and that from the West therefore they must and should spread to every corner of the globe.

A classic statement of this view was Francis Fukuyama's assessment in *The End of History and the Last Man* that the future of world politics would not be clashes between civilizations but the gradual spread of the one universal civilization, that of the secular, liberal, capitalistic, and democratic West.[10] At the end of this road would be a "world culture" in which political conflict would cease to exist and the only public issue would be the administration of material goods and welfare.

[9] Cardini, *Noi e l'islam,* p. 101.

[10] See Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992).

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The paradox lies in the fact that thinkers such as Fukuyama conjure up a West that does not exist except in their utopian imagination. Listen, for example, to the German journalist Sibylle Tönnies, who at the safe distance of three thousand miles declares, "Europe is not the West, America is the West," and who predicts that America will lead the way to a universal world culture based on peace, reason, and prosperity.[11] Adherents of this secularist utopian vision, such as the American commentator Ben Wattenberg, believe that the principles of the secular Enlightenment can survive forever deprived of their religious foundations.

I can think of a number of reactions to statements of this kind, which typically one meets more often outside the United States than here at home. One reaction is to say: You must be kidding. How can you call America the home of reason? Just look at the culture wars, or, if you are so inclined, just look at the religious Right. Another is to say: my friend, I wish you were right, but aren't you ignoring the fact that some people might not want this world culture? A third is to say: nothing in history ever happens according to plan and this won't either, so neither self-congratulation nor panic is in order. A fourth is to say that the West, and America as its leader, is in terminal decline, so don't expect universal leadership from us anymore. We're too tired.

All these are pertinent but miss the point I want to make, which is that America's ability to project peace, reason, and prosperity in the world depends not on our popular culture or on our role as standard-bearers of secular modernity, but on something that these flattering admirers completely ignore—that secular modernity and liberal reason alone cannot sustain America's strength either as a culture or as a political power.

That is because liberal reason rests on foundations that it cannot itself create. When those foundations crumble, the result is not that liberal reason takes flight on its own, but that it collapses into arrogance, superstition, and bigotry. The same thing happens to religious belief without the opposing polarity of liberal reason.

This is the most critical point I want to make in these remarks: reason and faith need each other; the modern West is the tension between them.

Liberal reason is by no means either weak or contemptible. It has achieved great things; without it we would have neither science, political freedom, economic growth, or true scholarship. Peace and prosperity in the world are directly proportional to the reach of liberal reason. But, and it's a very big but, liberal reason needs its anchor. That anchor is religion. Tradition, respect for the past, piety toward one's social and cultural heritage, and loyalty to country and to institutions can also serve, although, like reason, they tend to wither without their religious roots.

[11] Sibylle Tönnies, quoted in Richard Herzinger and Hannes Stein, *Endzeit-Propheten oder die Offensive der Antiwestler* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1995), p. 34. This spirited and often humorous book is a brilliant catalogue and devastating critique of anti-Western doctrines, marred only by its authors' fundamentalist faith in Enlightenment secularism. Still, radical pro-Americanism is such a *rara avis* in German political debate that this book's virtues easily outweigh its blind spots.

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The fact is, as many of the great diagnosticians of modernity saw, liberal culture deprived of religion becomes superstition. Or rather, liberalism on its own runs the risk of generating its own replacement religions, which, because they are not true religions, quickly degenerate into emotionalism and irrationality.[12] And that is the ultimate irony: liberal reason without its religious anchor becomes—unreason. This tendency has political consequences, as the examples below will show. The opposite danger, that religious dogma without liberal reason will become oppressive theocracy, is not a plausible scenario in the West today.

In making these points I am distinguishing my position from two others relevant in the 1990s. The first is the traditionalist Christian view that takes its cue from Dostoyevsky's comment that if God did not exist, anything would be permitted. The traditionalist view sees the Enlightenment as a sort of second Fall of Man, liberating reason from faith and thereby opening the door to all the amoral and inhuman ideologies and practices of the past two centuries, from the Jacobin Terror of the French Revolution to the totalitarian genocides and mass murders of the twentieth century. Even the benign versions of modernity, such as liberal democracy, stand condemned by traditionalists, because the purpose of liberal democracy is not to seek and uphold the truth, but to seek merely the policies and principles on which all can agree. One of the founders of traditionalist political thought, José Donoso de Cortés, scathingly referred to the liberal bourgeoisie as "the discussing class," *la clasa discutidora,* and warned that well-meaning but aimless discussion was always bound to be overwhelmed by ideologues without liberal inhibitions.

The traditionalist view contributes realism by reminding us that liberalism is not self-evident and that its enemies will not necessarily share its values. But it is inadequate because it emphasizes one pole of the tension, faith, over the other, reason. So, from an opposite perspective, does the more popular second position from which I want to distinguish my own, namely that of the pragmatists, or liberal humanists, who claim that no final truth about human nature, history, or fate exists, and that this uncertainty is precisely the source of modern freedom. According to liberal humanists, any attempt to impose dogmatic truths in the political sphere leads to unnecessary conflicts and at worst to intolerance and repression. Thus, Conor Cruise O'Brien, in the book reviewed by Larry Siedentop, attacks both Islamic fundamentalists and Pope John Paul II for opposing measures to stem population growth in the Third World.[13] Closer to home, the American pragmatic philosophy of John Dewey, Sidney Hook, and, more recently, Richard Posner, holds that questions of truth or doctrine are irrelevant in politics and that the only questions worth asking are about outcomes and consequences; in short, "what works?"[14]

[12] A "true" religion, it seems to me, must be public, universal, and comprehensible. It must display coherent doctrine and traditions of teaching, discipline, and social order. In practice, it must be at least some centuries old.

[13] See Conor Cruise O'Brien, *On the Eve of the Millennium* (New York: The Free Press, 1996).

[14] See Richard Posner, *Overcoming Law* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

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The problem with this liberal humanism, or pragmatism, is that it takes reason for granted, assuming, like Francis Fukuyama, that it is self-replicating and self-reinforcing. My point is that it is not. Without its anchor in religion, "what works" as a criterion of judgment too easily becomes "whatever promotes my interest." This, not traditionalism, is the danger facing the contemporary West, and the reason that I believe it worthwhile to argue that the West is neither religious nor secular, but a tension between the two.

I shall conclude by mentioning three examples of how reason without a religious foundation has turned to superstition: environmentalism, New Age beliefs, and multiculturalism. All three are doing very well in America today, which is itself a severe comment on the state of health of liberal reason. All three share a trait characteristic of superstitions throughout history: they are eclectic, drawing on a range of sources, bits of ideology, psychology, half-digested science, and widespread popular feelings. Above all, they fill an apparent emotional and ideological need, one not filled by traditional religion. And one not filled, either, by the liberal reason that, in the secular script, was supposed to replace religion.

In each of these three movements one can find elements of rationality. Or, to put it differently, reason and unreason are locked in battle in each. Environmentalism, for example, includes many people who take a highly rational approach to the issues, arguing, for example, from supposed scientific evidence for global warming, or telling us that environmental technology will provide many new jobs. The ultimate rational argument within environmentalism is the apparently unobjectionable one that since we all must live on the earth it is only rational to do all in our power to save it—or her.

Rational environmentalism has indeed been an important force in bringing about changes that have already vastly improved environmental conditions, even though the main reason that the environment is cleaner today than in 1960 is that we have had economic growth. The correlation between prosperity and a clean environment is absolute and knows no exceptions.[15] That is why growth-inhibiting environmental regulations are often counterproductive, even assuming that the problem alleged by the regulators really exists.

But there is another environmentalism, the one that starts from the apocalyptic claim that things are bad and getting worse and that we must take drastic steps to save the earth. Adherents of this stronger version take the evidence where they can find it, manipulating and creating it if necessary. They do so in part because, to them, environmentalism has become a universal source of value and its doctrines a source not just of political ideology but of faith. It is an irrational and superstitious faith, because it is not grounded in any serious relation to reality, but that is exactly my point. As religion declines, superstitions take its place. Environmentalism in its strong, doctrinaire version is one of these.

[15] See Mikhail S. Bernstam, *The Wealth of Nations and the Environment* (London: Institute of Economic Affairs, 1991).

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Another is the New Age beliefs—I hesitate to call them religions—that have sprung up in the West since the 1960s. These have a number of elements and draw on bits of ideologies, half-digested psychological doctrines, and political fashions. But that is not why New Age doctrines are popular or pervasive. They appeal to the same need filled, a few years earlier, by the political ferment of the 1960s, the need for personal reassurance that you are the most important person in the world and that, with the right beliefs or attitudes to life, you will become invincible and omnipotent. As political and economic reality modified for many the dreams of the 1960s, New Age beliefs of various kinds filled the gap. You may not be invincible in the mundane world, but with the right doctrine, you will be something special on the spiritual plane. So everything will be as the liberation script of the 1960s said it would.

I do not mean to be unduly sarcastic. The religious void is real; the reasons many search for faith and find it in New Age doctrines are valid. All I want to do here is to illustrate the fact that when liberal reason lost its hold in American culture in the later twentieth century it was replaced not by something superior but by superstition. And I want further to argue that the decline of liberal reason was a consequence, or a concomitant, of the decline of traditional religion among those elites that then became exposed to the new superstitions.

About my third example, multiculturalism, I can be brief. Again, the movement has a rational side, expressed by those who argue that multiculturalism is really nothing more than the political and social and economic recognition of American reality, or who argue that multiculturalism is in the best American tradition because it only means that the elites must now legally, economically, and pedagogically recognize those who were excluded in the past and give their descendants redress. A place in the sun for all is a deeply American doctrine. Who can object to applying it all round?

In political actuality, though, multiculturalism is often much more than this. It is an assault on American identity under the very banner of American identity, and it succeeds to the extent that liberal reason has lost ground. Liberal reason would not tolerate the perversions of education, of justice, or of social civility that multiculturalism sanctions but would call these things by their name and insist that those who would be part of America act like Americans. Liberal reason would insist that American history, traditions, doctrines, and religion cannot be arbitrarily disparaged or distorted to serve immediate interests and would furthermore unmask those interests to show the true stakes and reasons for the conflict. If liberal reason is too often failing to do so, I would argue that it is because the decline of traditional religion has entailed also the decline of reason.

G.K. Chesterton once said that when a man stops believing in God, the result is not that he believes nothing, but that he will believe anything. That's a snappy way of saying that faith and reason stand and fall together. The medieval theologian Anselm spoke of "faith seeking understanding." Turning his phrase on its head, one might say that reason deprived of its religious counter-pole loses itself in the search for alternate faiths or sources of commitment. Not having the doctrines, tradition, teaching, discipline, and intellectual coherence

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of the great Western religions, however, these alternate sources can only offer parodies of faith.

Now let me make some final observations and thereby spell out more specifically just what I mean by saying that the West is and should be both religious and secular.

The first observation is this: If it is true, as many people think, that America is the West or at least its most representative manifestation, then the West is de facto religious because America remains, outside the bicoastal cities, a deeply religious country. That, of course, is not what these observers mean. They look at the bicoastal cities, at our great universities, at Silicon Valley, and at Wall Street and see an incomparable productivity, energy, innovation, and change, and they attribute these strengths to the hegemony of liberal reason. But liberal reason is not nearly as powerful as they suppose, and to the extent it is powerful, it is because it coexists with religion.

Religion itself, however, changes too, and that is my second observation. Many of the mainstream churches have come under the control of ideologues who think it is more important to promote political agendas than to preserve the faith. That tendency is itself one of the most striking illustrations of my thesis that the decline of religion entails the decline of reason. Because what has happened to these church leaders? They have lost the desire or the ability to distinguish the things of Caesar from the things of God. Once you start to confuse the two, your ability to do much good in either sphere diminishes.

My third and final observation follows from this. Orthodox religions have become politicized and ideologized; liberal reason turns to superstition. We have seen this before in the West, many times even—once during the sixteenth-century Reformation. The Reformers saw politics and corruption in the Church of Rome. Their reaction was to form counter-churches that, lacking the theological foundations of Catholicism, often fell under the control of political leaders. And the humanism and scholarship of the Renaissance became distorted into the frenzied radicalism and superstition of the warlords, clerical fanatics, Anabaptists, millenarians, magicians, and witch-hunters whose passions bedeviled Europe for over a century.[16]

Perhaps the critical lesson, for those who would like to see the West survive, is this: the way to preserve both religion and liberal reason is to maintain a sense of distinction, a sense of the proper sphere of each. Now Western religions, Judaism and Christianity, are par excellence religions that flourish by means of logic, distinctions, and precise definitions. Indeed, this feature of Western religion is, I believe, the fundamental reason that liberal reason was possible at all and is therefore also the fundamental reason that our civilization rests on distinctions: between sacred and secular, political and private, economic and domestic, legal and moral. The analogy in religion is the Western—Jewish and Christian—distinction of Creator and creation. It is therefore quite right to

[16] As poignantly described in Frances A. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972).

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say, as the old liberal story did, that the West is nothing particular, if by that you mean no one single thing. But it is by the same token wrong to take either one of the two polarities—faith or reason—and make it the foundation and definition of culture. Faith without reason is limitless theocracy; reason without faith becomes a parody of both.

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Correspondence

Japan's "Miracle" Economy

To the Editor:

David L. Asher's article, "Economic Myths Explained: What Became of the Japanese 'Miracle'" (Spring 1996), is itself rooted in a myth—namely, that of "economic convergence." According to this implausible but widely held proposition, all capitalist systems must ultimately converge into one single form of capitalism, market forces make this convergence inevitable, and the economy of the United States is the model toward which the divergent capitalist systems are converging. Asher condemns the Japanese system for not providing "the benefits of convergence for most people" and for failing to pay the "costs of convergence" (p. 234). He says that a group of Japan specialists called "revisionists," with a track record of writing about Japan infinitely longer than his, have failed in their ideological responsibility by not declaring Japan dead and thus no longer a threat to the American way of life. He is appalled by "the general lack of adjustment of 'rational economic expectations' [code words for what should motivate people, according to Anglo-American economics] by the Japanese general public to the changed conditions of their economic system" (p. 234). He asks (actually hopes), "Will the market forces making for global convergence [crush] much of the former 'uniqueness' of the Japanese system?" (p. 215).

Contrary to Mr. Asher's basic assumptions, it is implausible that Japan, a country 1,500 years older than the United States with half its population and no natural resources except its people, will evolve to look like the United States. A commitment to American economic orthodoxy such as Mr. Asher's also fails to explain why Japan today has a per capita income about $10,000 larger than that of the United States or how Japan moved from having an economy 26 times smaller than that of the U.S. in 1955, when high-speed economic growth was just beginning, to one in 1994 in which the ratio was 1.4 times. Those who argue for convergence must also ignore the fact that today all the countries of East Asia, most importantly China, are devoted to duplicating the developmental miracle of Japan, not the high-profits but low-security capitalism of the United States.

As I am writing these remarks in late February 1996, Pat Buchanan is embarrassing both the Republican and Democratic parties by pointing out the differences in terms of citizens' welfare between Japanese and American capitalism. Contrary to Mr. Asher's contention, Japan did not experience a

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"recession" during the early 1990s in the technical sense—two quarters of net shrinkage of the economy—and during this so-called recession no male head of household was fired from his job, something simply unimaginable in Mr. Asher's "bite the bullet" capitalism (p. 224).

Asher states his conclusions before he even begins to investigate the state of the Japanese economy: It is in the grips of "severe stagnation," characterized by "industrial hollowing out, rising unemployment and corporate bankruptcy" (p. 215). It is an economy that has failed to appreciate Herbert Hoover's contributions to capitalist theory because "the government subsidizes firms to keep them from laying off workers" (p. 222). According to Asher, "the yen bubble can only be pierced in two ways" (reform to converge with the U.S. or runaway inflation) and "the outlook remains relatively bleak" (p. 223).

But this is the economics of the absurd—or of wishful thinking. The Japanese economic outlook is so bleak that during 1995 it only had a global trade surplus of $110.44 billion, down from $129.14 billion during 1994 (something the Clinton administration thinks is cause to celebrate). Japan is in such trouble it remains the first nation in history ever to achieve a $100 billion trade surplus, something it has kept up for a decade, right through Mr. Asher's recession. Its people continue to save close to a fifth of household income while the United States saves essentially nothing. Japan's economy is based on high-end manufacturing, and its public educational system produces high-school graduates with the equivalent of an American university degree.

Asher cites the embezzlement of funds by an employee of the New York branch of the Daiwa Bank (pp. 224–25) as evidence of the mismanagement of the Japanese economy. On that criterion the collapse of Barings Bank and the bankruptcy of Orange County, California, (to say nothing of the Keating and BCCI scandals) suggest that the British and American economies should be buried quickly before they start to smell. He says that the "revisionists," myself included, are to be reviled for suggesting that the Japanese economy amounts to a different kind of capitalism, and then goes on to acknowledge the revisionists' main point by saying that if the Japanese Ministry of Finance followed his advice it would have to "accept a lesser role for itself as the mere monitor, rather than shaper, of economic trends" (p. 221).

The revisionists' main argument is that, for better or worse, the Japanese state plays a role in the Japanese economy that can only be compared to the role of the Pentagon in the American military-industrial complex. Asher notes that the financial turmoil of the first half of the 1990s in Japan set the stage "for a movement toward wholesale bank consolidation based on the survival of the fittest" (p. 226) without any understanding that the Ministry of Finance's policies sought that end. Really big banks that can stand up to speculative capital flows are Japan's answer to the pressures of transnational and international capital.

Asher's article is pure Anglo-American capitalist ideology, similar to what the Marx-Lenin Institute in Moscow used to produce for the Soviets until August 1991. He does not (cannot) argue that the United States's economy

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performs better than Japan's in terms of creating high-value-added jobs or replacing excessive consumption with savings and investment for the future, so he merely contends that over time market forces will humble the Japanese and Germans and cause their economies to become as mismanaged and corrupt as ours.

The United States does not have post–cold war policies toward Japan or any of the other capitalist developmental states of East Asia, including China, the world's fastest-growing economy. What it does have is a trade deficit of a billion dollars a week with Japan—a hundred billion dollars a year with the whole area—while also paying for and providing defense for rich nations such as Japan and South Korea. To cover up this absurdity, American ideologists invoke the arcane propositions of high finance and short-term profits to show that everything will come out all right in the end. Americans love to read articles about the economic difficulties of the Japanese and Germans. Without their consoling message, the Americans would have to face the fact that their own gurus are no more potent than the Marxists of Moscow in defending the outmoded economic system of an erstwhile "superpower." They would have to come up with some new policies, the demand for which dominated the presidential and congressional elections of 1992 and 1994, and will do so again in 1996.

Among the things wrong with Mr. Asher's analysis is his conception of Japan's so-called bubble economy. An economic bubble is the financial equivalent of mob action in the streets; it feeds off group psychology and the safety of numbers in a genuine market. Japan's post-Plaza inflation was actually caused by the Ministry of Finance (MOF) and it was stopped by the Ministry of Finance. Differing from the United States, the Japanese government believed that the agreement to devalue the dollar in 1985 and raise the value of the yen required some governmental action to protect its own citizens, and it called a halt to virtually free money investment only when it started to get out of control. This is not a bubble; this is a governmental policy, not unlike President Reagan's decision to rearm without paying for it.

No one denies what Mr. Asher has just noticed: that for the past four years the Ministry of Finance has encountered difficulties in protecting both its favored clients and its own former officials who have moved into executive positions in its client banks and other financial institutions. But what Mr. Asher does not notice is that the high yen also provided wonderful political cover for forcing Japanese firms to invest in the other East Asian economies and for starting Japan down the road to becoming the headquarters economy for the world's manufacturing center of gravity. The MOF could blame any domestic industrial squeeze on the high-yen policies of the United States while also implementing Japan's true post–cold war strategy—its attempt to recreate the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, this time not at the point of a bayonet and promising to produce real prosperity for over half the world's populations. Moreover, whenever the high yen truly threatens domestic Japanese tranquility,

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the MOF can get the Americans to back down just by threatening to cut off its supply of capital. That is what happened during the summer of 1995, when the Japanese more or less forced the Clinton administration to heel and the high yen softened.

Mr. Asher says that the Japanese economy is characterized by the five Ds: deflation, debt, declining demand, deindustrialization, and default (p. 219). What young theorists fail to perceive is a sixth 'D'—namely, deception or disinformation. The Japanese know far more about the American and British systems than we know about theirs. They do not send party hacks (cf. the current American ambassadors to Japan and China) as ambassadors to Washington. They send people who have devoted their lives to the study of the world's largest open market and its political and social culture. Japan's policy in the world today is to buy a little more time—to milk the Americans a little longer and wait for conditions in East Asia to ripen. Within a few years they will either offer their own leadership in Asia or else guide their people into accepting Chinese hegemony.

In order to buy time, Japan sends out messages of change, disarray, or catastrophe whenever it looks like the Americans might be about to take action. It is always easy to convince the innocent that the timing of some action is wrong. For example, ever since the Japanese conservatives lost their majority in the Diet in 1993, the Americans have been talking about political instability in Japan—revealing that they were projecting American norms of government onto Japan and did not know how Japan is actually governed. Mr. Asher is doing the same thing. He suggests to those who do not know better that the capital of the world's richest big nation is gripped by recession, that its people are eating in soup kitchens and huddling around bonfires ("a growing divide between insider haves and outsider have-nots" [p. 1]). He should go and take a look and then go on to look at the rest of East Asia from Jakarta to Seoul as it integrates around the Japanese economy. He should also remember to bring lots of money, since dollars do not go very far in this part of the world.

Asher's tendentiousness is revealed in his characterization of the Economic Strategy Institute in Washington as "a revisionist think tank . . . founded and staffed by a group of doom-saying former bureaucrats" (p. 217). But on the same page he cites the book of Eisuke Sakakibara of the Ministry of Finance and gives as its publisher the people who printed the book, not the actual translator and publisher, which was the same Economic Strategy Institute. In short, Mr. Asher's message is both wrong and narcotic. It deflects Americans from seeing the most important development of the second half of the twentieth century—the enrichment and contemporary empowerment of Asia. And, like the appeasement of the 1930s, it misleads people into thinking that they do not have to change their ways in the light of new circumstances.

Let me conclude by asking you to accept my resignation as a member of the Board of Editors of *Orbis*. I really do not want to be affiliated with a campaign of disinformation disguised as political conservatism or economic correctness. *Orbis* has never been in the forefront of the analysis of the only countries on earth that could threaten the national security of the United

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States—namely, Japan and China. It has now chosen to join those who would deny that there is even a challenge from East Asia. That is not something with which I want to be identified.

Chalmers Johnson
President
Japan Policy Research Institute

To the Editor:

Early in 1990, when the Nikkei Stock Index was just beginning what was to be a long descent from the dizzying 39,000 level it had reached in December of 1989, an analyst for Nomura Securities was asked if there was anything that could bring the Nikkei down. Nothing, was the reply. Oil prices would stay cheap, interest rates would be low forever. And in the event of an earthquake, the voice dropped conspiratorially, buy the construction sector.

How far the mood and the Nikkei have slid from those halcyon days when it seemed that the Japanese markets had broken free of both the principle of gravity and economic laws. That slide is at the heart of Asher's question, "What Became of the Japanese 'Miracle.'"

Asher has given us an excellent snapshot of the Japanese economy both yesterday and today. He documents the buildup of the bubble economy, as low interest rates led to asset price inflation and a corresponding inflation of the national ego. Westerners taking their three-mile morning jog around the Imperial Palace (few Japanese could afford to live anywhere remotely near enough to make that habit convenient) were circumambulating land worth more than the entire state of California. Shares of second-line companies were trading at price-earnings ratios in the three digits, while the market capitalization of Nippon Telephone and Telegraph was greater than that of the entire German bourse. Japanese people sounded arch rather than sympathetic when discussing "the Anglo-Saxon recession" with visitors from the West.

As Asher illustrates, it wasn't only the Japanese who believed this apparent miracle. Western revisionists subscribed to it as well. And what is even more striking is the fact that they continued to do so long after the miracle vanished before puzzled Japanese eyes, leaving only the detritus of "deflation, debt, and declining demand" in its wake.

But while Asher explains revisionist theories, he fails to devote much analysis to explaining their persistence. Is this perhaps because their point of view has been so thoroughly discredited by reality? Is there anyone who now believes, as Chalmers Johnson apparently did in 1993, that Japanese banks will emerge even more awesome from their current travails?

Asher's description of the aftermath of the bubble is no less perceptive than his analysis of the events leading up to it. Central bank officials were optimistic that they could temper the worst excesses of the bubble without any effect on the real economy. They were utterly wrong. Asher, rightly, stresses the impact an ailing financial sector can have on the real economy as banks cut back on their lending.

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Also, in explaining the appreciation of the yen, Asher places too much emphasis on the role of the financial sector and neglects the structural reasons for a trade surplus that brought the yen to 80 to the dollar. (Asher could also have explored the fact that Japanese consumers failed to realize any of the corresponding benefits.)

Perhaps the most interesting development in post-bubble Japan is the way in which developments such as *endaka* led to an erosion of the famous consensus at the heart of Japan Inc. The Ministry of Finance is, of course, the first obvious (and eminently deserving) target of opprobrium.

But Japan Inc. has lots of scapegoats besides. Electronics makers, who saw their margins collapse with every up-tick of the yen, say car makers who insisted on selling cars made only in Japan contributed most to the surplus that kept the yen high. They also have turned on MITI for the fact that they live in a still regulated world where they have to pay far more than world prices for their energy. Thirdly, they blame the Bank of Japan for the sharp rise in interest rates that brought their *zaitech* financial speculation to a disastrous end in the late eighties.

Japan Is a Monolith No More

Asher raises some fascinating questions at the beginning of his article. To what extent was the Japanese miracle (and only the revisionists would fail to use the past tense) just a passing illusion? Might the Japanese regain their economic strength and appear even more awesome? Will the Japanese manage to reinvent themselves and turn their economy into a freer, more entrepreneurial one? And what are the political implications of whatever Japan emerges from the sobering experiences of the past few years?

In any event, it now seems clear that recovery won't be easy. In the fall of 1995, the government passed a massive Y14 trillion stimulus package—the latest and biggest in a series of desperate efforts to jump-start the economy. But government finances are now stretched; debt service as a percentage of the Japanese budget is rising rapidly. In fiscal 1995, the government borrowed Y2.9 trillion; in the year to next March, it is expected to borrow Y21 trillion, or 4.3 percent of current GDP. (The comparable figure for the supposedly profligate U.S. government is 2.4 percent.) What happens next year, then, when the effects of this year's spending start to dwindle but the government no longer has the means to put together such spending binges?

Asher, rightly, isn't overly optimistic that deregulation may serve as the catalyst for a robust recovery, although he might have given us more detail on just why there hasn't been more success on that front. Despite the obvious need for it (and notwithstanding the proud boasts of Japanese officials), deregulation has not been boldly pursued.

Moreover, the hollowing out of Japanese manufacturing may be even more traumatic than Asher suggests. This is, after all, a country where even to travel abroad meant, until recently (when the need to reduce the current account

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surplus became a national imperative), that you were not a good citizen. But this is also a country that values corporate survival above all else; unemployment, chronically understated by the official figures, will rise dramatically, as Japan Inc. continues to shift production to Asia.

Given his focus on financial developments, Asher could also have examined the extent to which the banks are really being transformed by the crisis or whether the Bank of Japan's policies are helping them glean record operating profits without reforming the way they function.

Perhaps the saddest thing about Japan's recent history is the extent to which the wealth was squandered during the good years. Hopefully, a more sober Japan will prove a wiser one.

Henny Sender
Finance Editor
Far Eastern Economic Review

To the Editor:

For those who regard Japan's economic trauma of the 1990s as indigestion, a mere pause before Japan's invincible economic machine gobbles up the world, David Asher's article, "Economic Myths Explained: What Became of the Japanese 'Miracle,'" will be disquieting. Mr. Asher correctly draws attention to the turmoil surrounding Japan's attempt to extricate itself from economic doldrums. Japan's postwar economic success spawned the myth of an infinite capacity for adaptation. The Japanese government, often viewed with a mixture of fear and respect, is presented as a master planner, capable of navigating skillfully, almost without friction, through treacherous economic times. The legendary close relationship between government and business is frequently contrasted favorably to confrontational American capitalism. An idealized version of Japan Inc. has been used as a model for America and others to emulate, an economic conquistador, and a scapegoat.

Mr. Asher's account of Japan's financial debacle of the 1920s and the current saga of the Japanese Ministry of Finance's (MOF) machinations in dealing with Japanese financial problems adds valuable perspective to the "Japan debate." Japan, as Mr. Asher reminds us, has experienced sharp dislocations in the past. Currently, the Japanese government, especially the MOF, is concerned with preserving its power rather than engineering proper reform of a system badly in need of repair. Japan's uniqueness—which is based on history, culture, and homogeneity—provides no exemption from economic and market forces that challenge America or any of the industrialized nations in Asia or Europe. Mr. Asher cogently presents the problems inherent in Japan's lack of "convergence" with the West.

The Japanese system contains many components. Clearly, the Japanese manufacturers are effective and competitive domestically and internationally. Japanese automobile factories certainly humbled General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler by providing American consumers with superior cars. Toyota and Honda forced America's industrial dinosaurs to produce better automobiles.

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Unfortunately, Japan's automobile and consumer electronics industries' victories in penetrating the American market were extrapolated. Thus, Clyde Prestowitz warned ominously in his book *Trading Places* that Japanese financial institutions (JFIs) would conquer American finance in "[a] process [that] echoed what had already happened in the manufacturing industries." He was wrong.

Unlike many of Japan's manufacturers, JFIs are inept, unprofessional, and uncompetitive. When the JFIs moved out of their protected, cozy domestic market where they had been granted regulated franchises, their weaknesses were exposed to the harsh realities of the deregulated open international markets. The JFIs resemble ossified government bureaucracies more than private sector entities.

Why are the JFIs different from Japan's awesome manufacturers? Here it is useful to distinguish between abstract and physical products. Manufacturers make physical products; financial institutions deal in abstractions. It is impossible to hide a flaw in a physical product. At the most basic level, manufacturers were exposed to competition and the JFIs were not. If Toyota built an overpriced, defective car, no one would purchase it. The JFIs were never accountable for poor performance or mistakes. Many of Japan's manufacturers have restructured and effectively adjusted to the difficult environment of the 1990s. Even Japan's cumbersome distribution system is undergoing change as the movement of physical goods is becoming increasingly responsive to market forces.

The chief culprit, MOF, granted the JFIs their franchises. Obedience rather than professionalism was required. The JFIs developed a mindset of dependence on the MOF during the time warp of the last fifty years. MOF bureaucrats are vastly overrated in terms of skills, and ethics operate in an environment of vagueness, obfuscation, secrecy, and circumvention. The JFIs, by misallocating Japan's capital, were the critical component in creating Japan's financial crisis of the 1990s and are responsible for its longevity and severity.

The results—inflated asset values, $400 billion in bad debts, the Daiwa Bank debacle, the failure of the credit unions Cosmos and Kizu and Hyogo Bank, underperforming portfolios, and dismal international investments—are outlined by Mr. Asher.

Both Japanese and foreigners have neatly rationalized JFI blunders as isolated events—aberrations of the so-called bubble economy of the 1980s. Under their scenario, judgment was suspended at the normally conservative and prudent JFIs from 1982 to 1992. And after the bubble, apologists claim, the JFIs will emerge triumphant from their financial hangover.

But while the bubble economy may have caused the problems to surface in a dramatic fashion, JFI flaws existed before, during, and after the profligate 1980s. Former governor of the Bank of Japan, Yasushi Mieno, in a stinging indictment, berated the Japanese commercial banks for their "pack mentality, their inability to evaluate risks and their unwillingness to innovate."

Connecting the dots between socio-economic factors and the mismanagement of JFIs is a prerequisite to understanding the systematic nature of Japan's financial crisis, and an experienced participant has no difficulty identifying

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the JFI structural weaknesses. There are four mutually reinforcing, culturally derived problems:

> In a society that considers decentralization anathema, the effects of overcentralization go unnoticed.
>
> The Japanese do not question the suffocating bureaucracy that buries accountability.
>
> Necessary specialization is not allowed in a nation that ostracizes individualities. The JFI personnel-rotation system—another slap at individuals—contains a contaminated byproduct: a short-term mentality, the antithesis of Japan's reputation for long-term planning.
>
> Provincialism has prevented assimilation of foreigners, joint ventures, and foreign skills.

Although a mountain of reform literature has been generated in Japan, the structural faults plaguing JFIs have barely been recognized. Instead, rhetoric about reform prevails.

Japan Inc.'s apologists, both foreign and domestic, dismiss the bad debt crisis, the Daiwa Bank fiasco, and the Japanese credit union failures as isolated events, which resemble America's S&L crisis, the Barings collapse, and the Orange County bankruptcy. First, it should be remembered that these selfsame apologists had previously argued that the MOF-led JFIs were exempt from Western-style capitalist financial mishaps. Japan's financial accidents should prove conclusively that Japan is not immune to market forces and incompetence. Superficial and misleading comparisons obscure the reality of Japan's structural problems.

Now the apologists ignore their previous predictions of a Japanese conquest of America. In the 1980s, the apologists warned that Japan could easily disrupt America's capital markets by selling their huge holdings of U.S. treasuries. This did not happen. Today, they sound the alarm again without indicating that Japan purchases U.S. treasuries out of self-interest and self-preservation, for the yen's strength was posing a serious threat to Japan's economy. Also, as Mr. Asher points out, Japan's fragile stock market was supported by foreign capital in 1995. Ironically, the Japanese stock market was very dependent on foreign, especially American, capital.

America's debt burden is without doubt dangerous. Any attempt to call attention to the U.S. dependence on foreign (or domestic) capital to fund its debt should be welcomed. However, America's problems—which were created in the U.S. of A., not abroad—can only be solved domestically without the distraction of a foreign scapegoat.

The dynamics of the financial world can generate excesses quickly. American fund managers are not immune to blunders based on greed, lax management, or misjudgments of risk. The financially bloody Orange County insolvency is an unfortunate example. Unlike in Japan, however, public information will show the

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extent of the damage and what happened; participants will be somewhat accountable; the problems are not structural; and institutions will adjust.

The American system of financial capitalism values full disclosure, legal recourse, and a free flow of information. Market forces supply informational feedback. Without these Western prerequisites, Japan cannot deregulate extensively or reform its dysfunctional financial institutions. Change will be extremely difficult, as the MOF and the JFIs have a vested interest in preserving the status quo.

Mr. Asher's article has penetrated the myths that permeate the usual ideologically tainted discussions about Japan. Mr. Asher has made a valuable contribution by focusing squarely on the difficult choices facing Japan, whose economy is characterized by both strengths and weaknesses.

Eugene R. Dattel
Author of *The Sun That Never Rose*

The Author Responds:

When I accepted Walter McDougall's invitation last fall to write an article on the Japanese economy since the collapse of the asset "bubble" of the late 1980s, I was aware that my best efforts to be objective and comprehensive in twenty pages might be judged insufficient or overly ambitious by some Japan watchers. However, I felt that an empirically grounded, multi-disciplinary, and historical approach to answering the vexing question "whatever happened to the Japanese economic miracle" would be refreshing and stimulating to many people in and outside the narrow world of Japan studies who were confounded by the failure of the Japanese economy and state to live up to the hype of the bubble period during the last five years. Chalmers Johnson's polemical reply demonstrates that the article has indeed irked at least one major figure in the field of Japanology. Yet, as reviews by both Eugene Dattel and Henny Sender indicate, it apparently succeeded in encapsulating and helping to explain the experiences of those who lived and worked through the period of boom followed by bust and know of Japan's mixed "new reality" firsthand.

In the following few pages I shall try to respond to the various points raised by my reviewers and further illuminate the general arguments I made in the original article. My outlook and analysis of the Japanese economy seem more or less in line with those expressed by Eugene Dattel and Henny Sender. At the same time, my views appear far out of line with those of Chalmers Johnson. For this reason, I will concentrate below on addressing Professor Johnson's rough critique and in the course of doing so elaborate on some of the various points raised by the other two reviewers.

As the contrast between the various reviews shows, there remains an amazingly large gap in understanding between economists, political scientists, international relations specialists, journalists, financiers, and business people of the basic facts of Japan's post-bubble economic history, and the implications of these facts for Japan's future. Perhaps the widest divide in interpretation and opinion regarding the Japanese economy is that between the so-called revisionist political economists such as Professor Johnson and the mainstream economists

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and "rational choice" school of political scientists. On the one hand, the revisionists highlight the many distinctive institutional and behavioral features of capitalism practiced in Japan, as compared to other leading industrial nations, frequently portraying Japan as a "post-modern," alternative political-economic paradigm existing "beyond capitalism." On the other hand, economists and "rat-choicers" in political science believe that Japan is not immune to "conventional economic forces." They argue that Japan's structural and behavioral differences are overplayed in the revisionist analysis, and that beneath the thick cultural veneer, Japan's political economy has long been operatively similar to those of the major Western nations. Moreover, as they see it, the same type of neo-classical analytical techniques used to explain away apparent institutional and behavioral differences in many Western political economies are readily applicable to Japan as well.[1]

The view of "awkward convergence" that I tried to present in the article falls decidedly between the two camps. Interestingly, it is a view that also is held by an increasing number of prominent native and foreign financial and economic analysts in Japan. Partly as a result of liberalization and deregulation, and partly as a result of markets literally "collapsing into liberalization" via high-yen-triggered import-price destruction *(kakaku hakai)* and asset deflation, the Japanese economy is moving, albeit slowly, in a more convergent or "normal" structural direction (by Western standards), where unadulterated economic analytical logic, rational-choice theory, etc. start to have a stronger degree of explanatory salience and meaning. Since the bubble's implosion, the stable financial footing from which much of the uniqueness in Japanese capitalism derives has eroded considerably. Myths of continuous asset appreciation have become maligned. People have learned painfully that, even in Tokyo's property and financial markets, what goes up eventually does come down. The same economic pressures plaguing the other members of the G-7 are readily identifiable in Japan: slow and fitful growth, expanding industrial hollowing out, increased unemployment, decreased income equality, burgeoning private and public deficits, and a restrained ability of the state to effect positive market outcomes.[2] Johnson would have us turn our heads away from these facts, but as Dattel writes, "Japan's uniqueness—which is based on history, culture, and homogeneity—provides no exemption from economic and market forces that challenge

[1] For a controversial example of rational choice applied to Japan, see J. Mark Ramseyer and Frances McCall Rosenbluth, *Japan's Political Marketplace* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1993).

[2] Unfortunately, among the many statistics I cited in support of my view, two were described incorrectly. Although these errors do not affect the validity of my argument, I would like to set the record straight.

On page 219, the data for "outstanding household liabilities" as a percentage of GDP in Japan versus the United States (215 percent versus 145 percent) actually refers to the percentage of total private-sector liabilities to GDP. Nonetheless, Japanese household debt—both as a percentage of GDP and as a percentage of household disposable income—was the highest in the G-7 in 1992, as the article asserts.

On page 227, the data on Japanese corporate "overseas production as a portion of all manufacturing" (according to the *Nikkei Shimbun*, 24.5 percent in FY 1994 and estimated to have risen to 27.3 percent in FY 1995) is for companies that are internationally active, not for all manufacturing companies. The percentage of total production carried out overseas by all Japanese manufacturing companies is much lower (9 percent).

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America"—or for that matter any of the other advanced industrialized economies in Europe or Asia.

This situation of "awkward" or "half-baked" convergence is not totally new from the standpoint of Japan's economic history. In the article, I describe how throughout the 1920s Japan—whose growth had exploded during WWI, triggering a postwar asset bubble that collapsed at the onset of the decade—experienced many of the same stresses it experiences today as the economy moved toward a freer, though not necessarily fairer, footing.[3] Then, as now, under the weight of stagnant economic growth, currency over-valuation, industrial hollowing out, widespread bank insolvency, and political immobilism, a growing divide emerged between social and industrial winners and losers. Mitsubishi's gain was viewed as the people's loss. Predatory "absentee landlords" accumulated the depressed assets of bankrupt farmers in the countryside, inspiring strikes and riots. The class conflict and social problems that Japan had largely avoided over the previous decades of miraculous growth suddenly became widespread, spurring a rise in political radicalism and nationalism.

However, as I am careful to point out, regardless of the pressure that economic structural change produces, I do not believe that the Japanese state is ready to accept what economists might call the "logic of convergence," i.e., the idea that it abdicate its central role in the economy (a development I believe necessary to reviving Japan's long-term economic prospects). Neither do I believe that most Japanese people are ready to change the way they think about their economy and willfully accept the costs that come along with the benefits of a more operatively convergent economic system. As the clash grows between economic reality and weltanschauung, I believe it could become a significant political problem for Japan, potentially with global ramifications. Prewar-style militarism is dead, but a new style of "bourgeois nationalism" at home and "independent Japanism" abroad could well emerge in the coming years from the seed bed of economic distress.

Although Professor Johnson implies that I think otherwise, Japan's economy is not about to become a replica of the United States in Asia. I share the professor's disdain for the way many analysts have in the past tried to project America's image onto Japan. One cannot—and in the article I clearly do not—ignore or wish away as irrelevant the continued involvement of the state in the Japanese economy. Nor do I overlook the very real economic impact of the many enduring institutional and behavioral differences that Professor Johnson and others have done so much to identify. For most of the last forty-plus years, the Japanese economic playing field has been consistently and deliberately distorted on the micro- and macro-levels by Japanese government protectionist and interventionist policies—high tariffs, capital controls, stringent regulation of finance, carrot-and-stick industrial policies, and bureaucratic "administrative guidance."

[3] See W.W. Lockwood, *The Economic Development of Japan: Growth and Structural Change* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1954), pp. 42–64.

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Maintaining Japan's unique, state-centered "insider capitalist" system in the face of the forces of economic modernization has been as significant an objective of Japanese government economic policy in the postwar era as maintaining growth itself. The accumulated results of this policy orientation for outsiders, regardless of nationality, are stunning. Foreign corporations have a share of sales and investment in the Japanese economy that is less than one-seventeenth what they have in the United States, and one-tenth that of what they have in Europe. Likewise, the rate of Japanese entrepreneurship has been extremely low. Japanese upstart innovators have been discouraged by the same high costs and risks endemic to the hyper-regulated economic system that have irrationalized increased inward trade and investment for foreigners. Although the situation finally is changing, more through the failure of state policy since the bubble than through deliberate design, Japan remains, by a wide variety of indicators, a statistical *sakoku* (closed state) compared with other leading economies—extremely difficult for foreign and domestic newcomers to penetrate.

Professor Johnson also is wrong to suggest that I reject wholesale the central tenets of revisionism. As a student in the mid-1980s, I grew up on the revisionist scholarship and continue to find many aspects of it persuasive. Thus, I totally accept what Johnson describes as the "revisionist's main argument," that is: "the Japanese state plays a role in the Japanese economy that can only be compared to the role of the Pentagon in the American military-industrial complex." In fact, having both worked in the Pentagon and the Congress as a Japan analyst and policy planner and watched the Ministry of Finance up close as a researcher participating in a number of study groups with MOF officials at a leading think tank in Tokyo in the early 1990s, I would argue that the ministry has a much more powerful role in the Japanese economy than the Defense Department has ever had in the United States.

However, looking at what has occurred in the Japanese economy over the last five years, I have a very hard time accepting Johnson's belief that the Japanese state (with the MOF at its center) remains effective in promoting Japan's continued economic development. Instead, in my view, from the beginning of the 1990s, for a number of reasons outlined in the article, the Japanese "developmental state" turned "anti-developmental"—"retarding growth, fighting vainly against market trends, and acting selfishly to protect its vested interests."

The decay of the developmental state had been a long time coming and, unlike Professor Johnson, some noted Japanologists foresaw it. As T.J. Pempel presciently observed back in 1987, even in the midst of the bubble period, "Japan Inc." was already "unbundling."[4] Liberalization and deregulation slowly were eating into both the guiding authority *(gyousei shidou)* and limiting powers *(kousokuryoku)* of the bureaucracy in the economy and allowing

[4] T.J. Pempel, "The Unbundling of 'Japan Inc.': The Changing Dynamics of Japanese Policy Formation," in *The Trade Crisis: How Will Japan Respond?* ed. Kenneth Pyle (Seattle, Wash.: Society for Japanese Studies, 1987), pp. 117–52.

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business interests the opportunity to break out of the industrial "convoy system" *(gosou sendan)* if they so chose. With the financial crash, the disintegration of cohesion in state policy making and disaggregation of state and industrial interests proceeded swiftly, leading to a significant decline in the effectiveness of the state as a growth-facilitating actor. The amity and close cooperation between big business, the bureaucracy, and the dominant Liberal Democratic Party in the process of economic policy making and industrial development came apart under the stress of asset market collapse. Leading corporate organizations whose financial support had been critical to the maintenance of the "system," such as the Keizai Doyukai and the Keidanren, started to oppose the LDP and push actively for market deregulation and a dramatic dilution of bureaucratic power. As I conclude in my article, "Over the last decade, the effectiveness of many of the unique Japanese institutions that captivated social scientists and struck a mixture of fear and awe into the hearts and heads of people in industry, labor, and government throughout the world has declined precipitously. . . . Many elements of the postwar Japanese economic system that once seemed to work well no longer appear to serve the nation's needs."

Unfortunately, rather than accept my more measured, "post-revisionist" analysis, Professor Johnson instead tries to pigeon-hole me as an inexperienced, naïve, doom-saying, solipsistic, "rat-choice" appeaser blind to the complexity of Japan's political economy and mode of capitalism. Furthermore, he consistently plays a game of parenthetical mind reading, putting words in my mouth at every possible occasion and presumptively ascertaining covert objectives in my analysis, even though I have no agenda other than to present and analyze the truth to the best of my ability. In spite of its considerable problems, Japan's economy is not about to sink beneath the waves of the Pacific as Johnson implies my analysis indicates. But neither is it at any time soon going to roar over the world economic landscape like a *tsunami,* as it did during the 1980s. American companies should not give up on worrying about competition from Japanese manufacturers, but they should not batten down the hatches and seek to "contain" the Japanese as some suggested in the 1980s either. Contrary to what Pat Buchanan and, apparently, Professor Johnson think, the considerable social and economic problems in the United States are made on the home front, not in the factories of Japanese auto and electronics manufacturers, and it is on the American home front that they must be solved.

Professor Johnson accuses me of being a victim of Japanese government "disinformation," but in many respects he seems the one deceived. He argues that "Japan did not experience a 'recession' during the early 1990s in the technical sense—two quarters of net shrinkage of the economy—and during this so-called recession no male head of household was fired from his job." In fact, Japan's nominal economic growth contracted significantly or was outright negative two out of four quarters each year in 1992–95 and by Japanese government standards was in recession (the average real GDP growth rate for the period was 0.65 percent). To deny that such a prolonged period of stagnation is a recession would mean that America, measured by Japan's slump, has not suffered a single significant economic downturn over the past fifty years. As

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for unemployment, in my article I cite a considerable amount of data explaining the severity of the situation. Not only have tens of thousands of male heads of households lost their jobs during the last five years, many more qualified women have been forced out of the work force by blatantly discriminatory redundancy policies. Frankly, it is demeaning to these unfortunate people, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of recent graduates who have not been able to secure decent jobs, that the professor would even make such an assertion.

The ultimate evidence that the professor is himself a victim of disinformation is his assertion that the bubble was not a bubble at all, but "governmental policy," and the subsequent deflation was nothing but a master stroke of policy genius designed to make Japan's banks stronger than ever. The facts make such claims impossible to accept. If the bubble was a "governmental policy," then it was a governmental policy disaster destroying a massive amount of the hard-earned wealth of the Japanese people. Furthermore, Japanese banks appear to be getting weaker, not stronger. As Dattel clearly explains, even if the majority of bad loans are written off over the next two to four years, even many large banks face a dark future as presently constituted, owing to a declining base of profitable business and a corporate culture insufficiently attuned to sound lending practices. According to Morgan-Stanley in Tokyo, Japanese city banks' average "return on assets" (ROA)—the ratio of operating profits to assets—is only 0.44 percent. This compares poorly to the global competition that Johnson foresees Japanese banks soon dominating. For example, U.S.-based Citibank has an ROA of 2.6 percent.[5] Veteran Tokyo-based financial journalist Henny Sender writes in her review, "Is there anyone who now believes, as Chalmers Johnson apparently did in 1993, that Japanese banks will emerge even more awesome from their current travails?"

Despite my dismay at the way in which Professor Johnson has addressed the findings of my article, ultimately I want to stress the value of the revisionist scholarship, not demean it. In the 1980s, the leading revisionist scholars and analysts, such as Professor Johnson, Clyde Prestowitz, and Karel van Wolferen, pushed forward Western understanding of the Japanese economy. Rather than ignoring the role of the government in the economy they focused on it, showing how the Japanese capitalist system differed markedly from that of other leading economic powers. Yet their Cassandra-like predictions of global Japanese economic dominance and of U.S. technological and industrial competitive decline just have not panned out. Perhaps many revisionists simply were fooled by the bubble, thinking that the asset appreciation and the capital expenditure increases it helped fuel were somehow fundamental signs of economic growth and strength, rather than symptomatic of an economic environment where supply and demand conditions had been radically distorted by government policies at the micro- and macro-levels. Dattel and Sender realize that—when will Professor Johnson and the other revisionists?

[5] See "Japan's Sick Banking System," *The Economist,* Mar. 9, 1996, p. 107.

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Yet, the revisionists were not alone in their misestimation of the sustainability of the Japanese late 1980s boom and its competitive implications for the United States. Far too many political scientists and economists overlooked the basics of finance and saw the bubble as merely the "logical extension" of the long period of miraculous growth that had preceded it. During the bubble, Japanese companies were glorified for earning next to nothing in pursuit of market share. Leverage was seen as an asset, not as a liability. In the minds of even some prominent economists, this not-for-profit-motivated "selfless-ness" seemed to justify classifying Japanese capitalism as "unique." Yet, to the extent it was unique, hindsight shows it was uniquely imprudent. Japanese financial institutions were portrayed as "world beaters" just because they were big (and, of course, they had the benefits of the bubble asset inflation to make themselves look even bigger). But, as Dattel's insightful review underlines, big is not always better. At the end of the day, making money matters. Low profit levels are excusable only to the extent that they lead to higher returns down the road. Otherwise, what investors are buying into is more or less a pyramid game—as those who lost out at the end of the bubble economy learned the hard way.

In conclusion, echoing an opinion I have voiced for a number of years, it is high time that Japan scholars go "beyond revisionism" and attempt to establish a new paradigm that better explains the nation's mixed economic reality.[6]

A muddy middle road exists between the boundaries of pure revisionism and neo-classicism that needs to be explored much further. Hopefully, my article has contributed to the exploration of this avenue of research rather than served as a hindrance to movement forward.

David L. Asher

[6] See David Asher, *Beyond Revisionism: Towards a New U.S. Japan Policy for the Post Cold War Era* (Washington, D.C.: House Wednesday Group, U.S. Congress, Mar. 1993).

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Review Essays

Indonesia at Fifty

by Guy J. Pauker

A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia in the 1990's. By Adam Schwarz. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994. 370 pp. $55.00; $19.95, paper.)

Indonesian Politics Under Suharto: Order, Development and Pressure for Change. By Michael R.J. Vatikiotis. (New York: Routledge, 1994. Revised. 234 pp. $16.95, paper.)

Indonesia In ASEAN: Foreign Policy and Regionalism. By Dewi Fortuna Anwar. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994. 334 pp. $55.00.)

In many ways, Indonesia has proved the skeptics wrong. Desperately poor when it gained independence in 1949, the country has since recovered from 350 years of Dutch colonial exploitation, followed by Japanese military occupation in 1942–45 and four years of guerrilla warfare against the returning Dutch, to begin significant economic development. Once a country in which the national elites ignored almost entirely the need for economic development, Indonesia is on the verge of becoming another one of the Pacific Rim's newly industrialized nations.

During the same time, Indonesia has managed to sustain a rapidly increasing population, despite predictions to the contrary. The first census, conducted in 1961, counted 97 million people living on 992 of the archipelago's 13,677 islands. But about two-thirds of the total population was crowded on the island of Java, one of the planet's most densely settled areas. In those days, many observers wondered how that island, even with its fertile volcanic soil, could nourish its growing population. Malthusian calamities were considered more likely than a prosperous future.

Yet while its population has doubled in size to nearly 200 million, Indonesia has gone from being the world's largest importer of rice to being self-sufficient in that crop. Poverty, as defined by the World Bank, has dropped from 60 percent of the total population in 1970 to 15 percent in 1990. Education,

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public health, and family planning are successful, high-priority programs nationwide.

Such achievements would not have been possible without wise policy decisions and competent management by President Suharto (currently seventy-five and serving his sixth five-year term in office) and his senior aides. While Indonesia's first two decades of freedom were marred by government gridlock and often-violent civil strife, Suharto's administration has consistently promoted economic development, with political stability as its indispensable foundation.

Cracks in the Foundation

The Suharto administration's success in achieving its goals raises questions about some of its dubious recent actions. On September 1, 1995, according to Reuters, two young journalists, Achmad Taufik and Eko Maryadi, were sentenced to thirty-two months in jail by a Jakarta court for having been "proven guilty" of "publicly showing hatred against the legal government." The court added that "what the defendants have done can disturb the stability and divide the nation's unity."[1]

In March 1995, the government-backed Indonesian Journalists' Association expelled thirteen members, including the former chief editor and the senior editor of *Tempo,* an immensely successful weekly newsmagazine, effectively forcing them out of the profession. Previously, in June 1994, *Tempo* and two other newsmagazines had their publication licenses canceled for running articles critical of the Suharto family's business activities and various matters concerning cabinet members.[2]

Such actions highlight the question of whether economic development should take priority over democracy in countries struggling with widespread poverty. When premature democracy retards the implementation of anti-poverty policies, it is difficult to give priority to democracy for purely ideological reasons. If empirical evidence shows that economic development requires authoritarian political stability, it becomes a pragmatic consideration whether the press should be muzzled. But why, in general, are authoritarian governments unable to tolerate criticism?

Indonesia offers a rather simple answer. A fragile civil society, with a still largely uneducated population susceptible to conflicting ideological agitation, may require temporary authoritarian rule to neutralize extremists and maintain political stability. But if the government elites and the bureaucracy are honest, they should be able to tolerate a free press and even benefit from it.

In Indonesia today, however, the ruling elites depend on repressing freedom of expression not only to promote economic development, but to ensure the survival of their regime. In August 1995, the Berlin-based organization

[1] "Indonesia Jails 2 Reporters in Crackdown on Media," *Los Angeles Times,* Sept. 2, 1995.
[2] "Indonesia Ridding Press of Critical Writers," *New York Times,* Apr. 17, 1995.

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Transparency International published a "corruption index" based on seven independent surveys and including forty-one countries. Indonesia was rated the most corrupt of these countries.[3]

Evidently, a free press staffed by Western-style investigative reporters would not target the underpaid government clerks who extract small bribes for public services. Rather, it would expose the multimillion-dollar deals that have made the Suharto family with its six children allegedly richer than anyone else in the country, and also would dwell on the rapacious personal enrichment practices of many other members of the civil and military elites. It is doubtful that the regime could survive the revelations of a free press. At present, most Indonesians remain largely ignorant of these facts.

A Dual Analysis

Surprisingly, the government's corruption draws little attention from foreign press. Despite Indonesia's intrinsic importance as the fourth most populous country in the world, strategically located across vital sea lanes, it is curiously ignored by both global media and scholars. Serious studies on contemporary Indonesia are few and far between, except for some good Australian work that is not widely known.

Two books published in 1994 are therefore a welcome addition to the available literature. Both Adam Schwarz and Michael R.J. Vatikiotis served as resident correspondents in Jakarta for the Hong Kong–based weekly *Far Eastern Economic Review* between 1987 and 1992. They are experienced reporters with a scholarly bent who acquired a wide circle of Indonesian contacts and draw on an impressive range of English and Indonesian publications in their books. Of the two, Vatikiotis is more casual and judgmental, and less detailed, while Schwarz is scholarly and thorough. But both books convey reliable, lucid, and realistic images of Indonesia during its recent development.

Both authors can hold their own against academic political scientists, but they unfortunately lack a broader sociological outlook. Though their stints as correspondents brought first-hand knowledge of the country and an apparent command of the national language, neither author offers much information about the life of the common people, either in the countryside or in the cities and their appalling slums. Vatikiotis and Schwarz instead keep their focus on the activities of the elites and, to some extent, on those of the rising middle classes.

Some crucial long-term social dynamics—such as the impact on the masses of increasing access to television, radio, and improved means of transportation—are ignored. The consequences of successful education—increased literacy among young people resulting in millions of unemployed

[3] Barbara Crossette, "New Watchdog Group Ranks Nations in 'Corruption Index,'" *New York Times*, Aug. 13, 1995.

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high-school graduates and hundreds of thousands with university degrees who have a hard time finding jobs—are only mentioned in passing. Yet in the long run, the dashed expectations of these young people pose a greater structural threat to political stability than a free press does. Even a democratic, honest, and relatively efficient government can be destabilized by explosive social tensions.

In addition, neither author seems concerned about the still-ticking "population bomb." They fail to discuss the long-term implications of population expansion, perhaps because a remarkably successful family-planning program, fully supported by President Suharto and unopposed by religious interests, has reduced the rate of growth from an estimated 2.4 percent at the time of the 1961 census to 1.6 percent in 1995. At this rate, Indonesia has at least forty-three years before its population will again double, rather than the twenty-nine years between the 1961 and 1990 censuses. But the country still faces the formidable problem of feeding, housing, educating, and employing a population growing by perhaps three million people annually. And neither Vatikiotis nor Schwarz discusses whether economic development can keep pace with such growth.

The Suharto family's business dealings have allegedly made them richer than anyone else in Indonesia.

Notwithstanding these blind spots, both reporters deserve our gratitude for their thoughtful accounts and analyses of recent major political and economic activities that they either observed while stationed in Indonesia or for which they had accounts from reliable local sources. To appeal to a broader audience, they also provide substantial historical background.

Schwarz deftly makes the transition from reporter to historian, and his book is a reliable source in its entirety. Vatikiotis, unfortunately, is frequently out of focus in commenting on historical events and certain personalities. Perhaps he merely relied too confidently on Indonesian sources who had their own agendas, a danger faced by all those working in foreign-area studies. In fairness to Vatikiotis, these minor errors of detail do not diminish the usefulness of his work.

The unusual fact that two experienced reporters for a prestigious periodical were working simultaneously in the same place and wrote books chronicling their observations is definitely to the reader's advantage. They independently confirm the same stories, while filling the information gaps caused by repression of the Indonesian press and the lack of interest among the American media.[4] And where Vatikiotis presents strong editorial opinions and fewer details, Schwarz offers facts that speak for themselves alongside rather restrained commentary. From the sum total of their observations emerges the

[4] After this review was written, the *New York Times* published two articles by Edward A. Gargan on Indonesia, one on Indonesian business dealings under Suharto, the other on government repression of the country's press. See Edward A. Gargan, "Family Ties That Bind Growth: Corrupt Leaders in Indonesia Threaten Its Future," *New York Times,* Apr. 9, 1996; and Edward A. Gargan, "The Perils of the Press in Indonesia Include Jail," *New York Times,* Apr. 18, 1996.

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following conclusion: while Indonesia has achieved a remarkable rate of economic growth in recent years, its governmental structure and processes have decayed drastically, raising objective doubts about the regime's capacity to survive much longer.

The severe international judgment about corruption in Indonesia has already been noted, and Vatikiotis and Schwarz both give concrete examples of such corruption. Whether these warrant condemning Indonesia more harshly than, say, China or Nigeria is a question beyond the scope of this essay. But it should be mentioned that, in contrast with those two and some other countries, using violence and arbitrary imprisonment to acquire wealth is not common in Indonesia. Apparently, the system relies primarily on political power and bureaucratic skills. President Suharto maintains control at the top, and skillful manipulation is an adequate alternative to physical coercion. The system also benefits immensely from the political culture's submissiveness to authority, all the way down to local government. That strengthens the control by the top elites and provides ample opportunities for enrichment, albeit on a smaller scale, at provincial and local levels, where business people and villagers pay officials for "protection," specifically, relief from an endless maze of bureaucratic restrictions and restraints.

For those in the inner circle, the financial rewards can be enormous. We learn that Suharto has helped three Chinese-Indonesian businessmen who stood out among their peers amass multibillion-dollar fortunes by creating privileged conglomerates that are involved in most of Indonesia's profitable businesses, and are flourishing abroad as well. According to Schwarz, the three tycoons—Liem Sioe Liong, Bob Hasan, and Prajogo Pangestu—have a "continuing close personal relationship with Suharto," and as "the top rank of Indonesia's crony businessmen . . . form a fairly exclusive club" with at least four of Suharto's six children and a few other close relatives (p. 139).

Though these tycoons owe their start in business to the political support of Suharto and a few other powerful Indonesian personalities, they are much more than mere pull-peddlers. Schwarz writes about Liem Sioe Liong, who came to Java from China's Fujian province in 1937 as a penniless twenty-one-year-old: "Liem has built his empire with a true entrepreneur's eye for business opportunities and a talent for attracting first-rate partners" (pp. 109–10).

Whether and how Suharto has structured a silent partnership with these cronies is obviously a well-guarded secret. But Schwarz, quoting the Yale University 1991 doctoral dissertation of Jeffrey Winters, relates that the CIA estimated Suharto's personal wealth in 1989 at $15 billion and attributed an equal amount to the rest of his family (p. 144). If true, that fortune would vastly exceed the amounts allegedly stolen from the Philippines by Ferdinand Marcos. However, these figures are probably mere speculation. Schwarz also quotes an economist from Australian National University, Hal Hill, who believes the CIA estimates are exaggerated. And Vatikiotis's figures are strikingly different. "Estimates of the size of Suharto's family assets are in the $US 2–3 billion range, but any calculation is at best guess work," he writes (p. 50).

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Family Business

Although Suharto's personal business arrangements are shrouded in secrecy, tales of his childrens' and close relatives' ventures circulate orally, despite exclusion from local media coverage. The elites feed on gossip while the masses enjoy blissful ignorance, which presumably strengthens the country's political stability.

There is no space in this essay to relate in any detail what Schwarz and Vatikiotis learned about the Suharto family businesses while in Jakarta. But even a brief sample of the activities of four of Suharto's children is eye-opening. In 1982, the second son, Bambang Trihatmodjo, then twenty-nine, formed the Bimantara Group. Two years later, with his older brother, Sigit Haryoyudama, and Suharto's cousin Sudwikatmono, his group received a monopoly on the import of plastics. In the late 1980s, Bimantara diversified "into electronics, shipping, milk processing, plywood manufacturing, telecommunications, television broadcasting, aircraft leasing, construction, real estate, sugar and palm oil plantations and food retailing." By 1993, Schwarz writes, "the group had grown to include about 100 subsidiaries with total assets of around $US 1.9 billion and sales of at least $US 400 million" (pp. 141–42).

The eldest daughter, Siti Hardijanti Rukmana ("Tutut"), went into business shortly after brother Bambang, in partnership with her husband and her two younger sisters. She founded the Citra Lamtoro Gung Group and got a sweetheart deal, collecting a percentage share of the toll revenue from a road running through Jakarta that was "well above [the group's] percentage share of the construction costs" (p. 142). Then the group obtained permission to start the first nationwide private television channel, which, unlike state television, could sell advertising. Next, she obtained a license to import the Malaysian Proton automobile. As her business empire expanded, Tutut openly went into agro-business with Prajogo Pangestu, the billionaire crony. Schwarz writes: "Like her siblings, Tutut's main business asset is an ability to procure government licenses and state-bank financing. In 1992 Citra Lamtoro Gung Group's revenues were estimated at some $US 400 million" (p. 143).

Suharto's youngest son, Tommy, deserves more space than can be given him here. His Humpuss Group was formed when he was twenty-two. Schwarz relates that Tommy started with exclusive distribution contracts for two important petro-chemical products manufactured by Pertamina (the national oil company), allocations of oil for sale overseas, and an exclusive concession to export liquefied natural gas to Taiwan. Then in 1989, he bought control of a charter airline with Bob Hasan and used it to break the monopoly of the national airline, Garuda, on the use of jet aircraft and on flying international routes. Other business ventures followed, and by 1992 revenues from Tommy's interests were estimated to be in excess of $500 million annually (p. 143).

Tommy's most notorious activity was a calamitous venture initiated by some Chinese-Indonesian businessmen who wanted to use him to establish a monopoly on the sale and distribution of cloves, the spice that is mixed with tobacco to produce Kretek cigarettes, Indonesia's most popular brand. The

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venture ended in disaster for all parties. Tommy's new company ended up with a surplus of 170,000 tons of cloves, while the Kretek manufacturers continued to obtain their annual supply of 80,000 tons directly from the growers. Clove prices dropped as a result of oversupply, and, after causing a major political crisis and wasting $350 million of public funds, Tommy suggested, apparently unsuccessfully, burning half the new crops (pp. 153–57). Schwarz records: "Brash, aggressive and cocky, Tommy is the most public of the Suharto children and, as such, the most dangerous to his father. . . . The army shares the business community view that Tommy has done more than the other crony businessmen in making nepotism and corruption a serious political liability for Suharto" (p. 143). Vatikiotis confirms that

> just as the government's economic deregulation programme seemed to have reached a peak in 1990, Suharto's children were solidifying their hold over the most lucrative areas of the economy. Private airlines, television stations, radio, newspapers were brazenly set up under their ownership. New monopolies were replacing those deregulated by [the president's] economic ministers. Once established, these companies bent the rules shamelessly (p. 152).

There is, of course, much more in these two new books on contemporary Indonesia than the shocking story of the dealings of Suharto's family and cronies. But these facts deserve special attention because they are the cancer likely to destroy the body politic and in time deprive Indonesia of the remarkable achievements from the earlier years of the Suharto regime.

Trouble Spots

Other troubles also threaten Indonesia's future, such as the role of the military in that still fragile national community. Despite the potential for division on a vast archipelago inhabited by numerous ethnic-linguistic groups of varying sizes—with a nationalist outlook originating among a small elite and only gradually trickling down to the masses—nation building in Indonesia so far has been a success story. Much of the credit belongs to the Indonesian Armed Forces, a practically spontaneous creation of nationalist young men who rallied against the Dutch colonial forces during the 1945–49 struggle for independence. Although some factionalism and rivalries existed, that generation of military considered themselves to be the founders and guardians of the state. With the exception of Suharto, none of that generation remains in command positions. They have been replaced by the second generation of professional military, who were trained in peacetime and are less and less inclined to assume non-military responsibilities.

To Western eyes, that may look like a welcome development—confining the soldiers to the barracks. Actually, under present Indonesian conditions, such a move could increase the fragility of the state, as civil society is still not strong enough to provide an alternative source of cohesion. Until recently, Suharto had retained full control of the military and could rely on its loyalty. Then he

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began imposing decisions to which many officers were strongly opposed, such as his 1988 selection of General Sudharmono to be his vice president. But as Schwarz points out, the military was also losing many big businesses to the Suharto children, and the president perhaps distanced himself from his former colleagues to assert the independent nature of his legitimacy (p. 283). Still, the military's discontent has not as yet become open opposition.

Nevertheless, Suharto reacted by appointing personal aides, and even relatives, to key command positions as they were vacated, rather than filling such positions with officers directly in the line of succession. He also relied increasingly, we learn from the two authors, on Muslim politicians as a countervailing power to the officer corps, the majority of whom are traditionally hostile to Islamic politics. Growing resentment in the military may lead to political instability in the future.

Another portent of future trouble is economic policy making. From the beginning of his regime, Suharto has relied on a group of American-educated economists known as the "Berkeley Mafia," who took over the management of the Indonesian economy when it was truly a basket case at the end of the Sukarno era. With Suharto's full political support, they turned the economy around, gained the respect and confidence of Western sources of aid and investment, and managed the country's resources wisely when oil prices rose substantially in the early 1970s.

The story of this group of economic technocrats deserves a fuller treatment than Schwarz and Vatikiotis offer. In the mid-1950s, the Ford Foundation sponsored several faculty members from the University of California at Berkeley's Department of Economics to take teaching positions in Jakarta. At the same time, Indonesia's one Ph.D. in economics, Professor Sumitro Djojohadikusumo—former finance minister, now dean of the University of Indonesia's School of Economics—selected some of his most promising students to go to Berkeley for advanced degrees in economics. Widjoyo Nitisastro, M. Sadli, Subroto, Ali Wardhana, and Emil Salim all studied at Berkeley and returned to become members of the faculty at the University of Indonesia. But President Sukarno ignored their accomplishments because of their American education. Instead, he appointed as his economic planners men without professional training, whose tool of choice was numerology.

Meanwhile, the Army Staff and Command School in Bandung invited the "Berkeley Mafia" to lecture regularly to senior officers. Through these lectures, General Suharto got to know the group, and when he became president in 1967, he named them to his cabinet. Even today, while no longer holding cabinet positions, Widjoyo Nitisastro and Ali Wardhana are Suharto's personal advisors on the economy.

But in recent years Suharto has been under pressure to follow a different economic policy, vigorously promoted by his protégé, Minister for Science and Technology B.J. Habibie, a brilliant, German-trained aeronautical engineer who, according to Schwarz, "believes that Indonesia must reorient its economic policies to focus on the comparative advantages that only technology can provide, rather than relying on the nation's comparative advantages of abundant

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labor and natural resources" (p. 86). Against the policies of the technocrats, Habibie has been ordered by Suharto to take charge of aircraft manufacturing, steel mills, shipbuilding, and other "strategic industries." Schwarz reports that "financial information on the so-called strategic companies is sparse and generally considered unreliable. All are thought to be unprofitable, although they have absorbed many billions of dollars of government investment" (p. 87). Besides diverting resources from the careful economic development plan, Habibie's "nationalist" emphasis on high technology also has the disadvantage of creating few jobs, even if successful, in a country desperate to absorb a young, growing population into its labor force.

Overall, though, Suharto's skill as an economic manager is still in evidence, and it may be too early to assess the outcome of his current policies. While Habibie's controversial high-tech offensive continues, the basic policies of the technocrats have not been abandoned. Indeed, the growth rate of GDP in early 1994 was higher than anticipated at 7.1 percent. More significant, Habibie's economic nationalism has not discouraged foreign investment. The amount approved for 1994 soared to a record $23 billion, "tripled from the total approvals in 1993."[5] And when President Bill Clinton and the late commerce secretary Ronald H. Brown visited Indonesia in November 1994, they signed seventeen agreements involving some $40 billion worth of business for American companies.[6]

A Western Bias

Depending upon the angle of examination, Indonesia's future can appear alternately hopeful or bleak. But perhaps the sordid tales emerging from the reports by Schwarz and Vatikiotis distort Indonesia's image because they see the country through Western eyes. The idea of conflicts of interests—whereby it is illegal, or at least unethical, to use a relative's political power for personal gain—is not a universal concept. On the contrary, in many places such connections have been widely accepted, and still are, as a means to amass riches. Petty corruption, in turn, could be viewed as a way of extracting payments for services to which the public is entitled at no cost—in other words, a perverse form of taxation by grossly underpaid minor officials.

In the case of Indonesia, the president's family and cronies are undoubtedly greedy, but whether they cross the thin line between taking full advantage of their influence and illegality is open to question. Some knowledgeable and critical observers can argue that no Indonesian laws have been broken by creating the conglomerates that today dominate the Indonesian economy.

[5] Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, *Pacific Economic Outlook 1995–1996* (San Francisco, Calif.: Asia Foundation and Arthur Andersen, 1995), p. 33.

[6] Andrew Pollock, "Companies Rediscovering Indonesia," *New York Times*, Dec. 4, 1994.

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Closer scrutiny reveals a crucial difference between the activities of the Suharto family and cronies and those of, for example, the late Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos. The latter treated his country's economy like a liquidation sale. Assisted by incompetent cronies, he literally stole desperately needed capital, transferring it to foreign bank accounts or assets overseas. At the end of the Marcos regime in 1986, the Philippines lagged far behind its neighbors in economic development; it had been the prey of an asset-stripping gang.

Suharto's family and, to a large extent, his most important cronies reinvest at home the proceeds of their boundless greed. In this respect, they typify the early phase of development under capitalist conditions known as "primitive accumulation." In the United States, public outcry limited the activities of the nineteenth-century robber barons before the existence of antitrust legislation. The Indonesian conglomerates prosper under similar conditions. Furthermore, the Suharto children, who do not necessarily possess superior entrepreneurial instincts and managerial skills, rely on their successful Chinese-Indonesian partners and on capable professional managers.

Suharto's kin also make a unique contribution to the Indonesian economy that is easily overlooked by those outraged at the amoral character of the whole process. The Indonesian bureaucracy is hobbled by red tape, indifference, fear of responsibility, and incompetence. As a result, precedent-breaking projects are often delayed, postponed, or avoided. But when the Suharto children are involved in a project, they go directly to their father if progress is slow, and the roadblocks disintegrate.

These reflections complicate speculation about the future of Indonesia should the Suharto regime fall victim to the exposure of its practices, especially the present rampant greed at the top. Would the result be a moral catharsis followed by a pattern of development more compatible with Western values, or a loss of entrepreneurial energy and an economic descent into chaos?

A Cultural Conundrum

Lastly, Indonesia's prospects cannot be evaluated without an attempt to reach into the country's cultural tradition, a task that neither Vatikiotis nor Schwarz attempts. Democracy and the rule of law are Western concepts to which a few Dutch-educated Indonesians were exposed early in this century in Europe. That small group of nationalist politicians introduced the concept of democracy to their country less than fifty years ago. But in practice, democracy quickly became more form than substance.

Today, it is difficult to know how much the Indonesian general public understands of the rituals of democracy, especially when they are manipulated to prevent changes of government. In any event, these alien, recently imported political practices have to compete with deeply rooted, indigenous perceptions, namely, subjects' views of the monarch as endowed with supernatural and spiritual powers. An indicator of the difference between the two systems is the

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Indonesian difficulty in comprehending and accepting the separation of powers. An absolute ruler cannot conceive of an independent legislature and judiciary. It follows that the Indonesian parliament is a rubber stamp as far as most legislation is concerned (as a concession to Western notions, it is a fairly free debating society). The judiciary, in turn, is free only in cases not affecting the ruler.

In past centuries, successful warriors founded new dynasties. As a successful Javanese warrior, who grew up in the countryside and absorbed its folklore, Suharto likely sees himself on some level as the founder of a new dynasty. If his children cannot succeed him in office owing to the alien political concepts of the modern world—with its relentless ideological pressure—they must at least acquire power from great wealth. Viewed in this context, the family's business practices are culturally legitimate. Indeed, in central Java many educated people, even some connected with the prestigious Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, may assert that Suharto should be viewed as the modern sultan and, as such, his family is entitled to all they have.

Suharto refuses to discuss the problem of his succession, perhaps because he cannot accept the notion that his successor will not be a member of his family—meaning he will fail to create a new dynasty. But his children are unable to succeed him, and the question of who will be the next president is at the heart of Indonesia's future. Previous vice presidents chosen by Suharto, while constitutionally legitimate as successors, were unacceptable to the military. In contrast, the present incumbent is a former commander of the armed forces. General Try Sutrisno was hand-picked by the military leaders—who outmaneuvered Suharto to get Sutrisno the position of vice president—and the likelihood of a plot to deny him the succession in favor of an unconstitutional contender is low. In the event of Suharto's death in office, Sutrisno would probably serve out the term unchallenged, but intense electoral maneuvering could mar the subsequent presidential election. However, current Indonesian politics are too opaque for any substantive predictions.

The ASEAN Connection

Readers who have updated their understanding of recent developments in Indonesia from the works discussed above will also benefit from the book on Indonesian foreign policy by Dewi Fortuna Anwar, *Indonesia in ASEAN: Foreign Policy and Regionalism*. Anwar is the head of the Regional and International Affairs Division in the Centre for Political and Regional Studies of the prestigious Indonesian Institute of Sciences. She also has served as a research executive at the Centre for Information and Development Studies, B.J. Habibie's think tank, since it was established in September 1992. Her close ties to the government are mentioned here in detail only because her book is refreshingly candid.

Despite the treatment meted out to some journalists critical of the government, Anwar does not hesitate to criticize President Suharto's foreign

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policy, even in an academic work with international circulation. Apparently, the authorities repress only criticism that they consider destabilizing.

Anwar is a fine scholar with strong analytical and conceptual skills. Her study illuminates the critical years of President Sukarno's foreign policy, especially the new regional and global direction Indonesia assumed after President Suharto came to power. Using survey techniques, Anwar provides valuable insights into the perceptions of sixty-two members of policy-making and other elite Indonesian circles, as well as sixty members of elite circles in the other countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), whom she interviewed in 1986–87 (p. 192).

Avoiding the hypocrisy of many quasi-official commentators, Anwar bluntly states that Indonesia joined ASEAN to facilitate domestic political stability and economic development (p. 40)—in other words, not out of concern for the region. She adds that economic and functional cooperation are only of "peripheral importance" to Indonesia (p. 59), and criticizes the country's lack of interest in ASEAN trade and industry (p. 102) and the low priority assigned to ASEAN projects (p. 107).

ASEAN economic projects, she writes, were created mainly for prestige purposes (p. 82). By contrast, ASEAN facilitated military cooperation among member nations (p. 135), thus promoting what it was not supposed to do while ignoring its alleged mission. While Indonesia had little to gain from economic cooperation with its neighbors, competing for the same investments and markets, it found military cooperation useful, despite professed neutralism, after Vietnam's victory in 1975 raised the specter of regional military dominance.

Discussing political cooperation within ASEAN, Anwar admits that suspicion of Indonesia is the major obstacle to an autonomous regional order (pp. 174, 182). Whereas Indonesia argued that a "Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality" should be based on its esoteric concept of "regional resilience," Malaysia and Singapore, obviously distrustful of Indonesia, proclaimed the necessity of major powers' guarantees (p. 179).

Particularly surprising is Anwar's candid admission on an issue that still plagues Indonesian foreign policy: "The military seizure of East Timor, notwithstanding the argument that the Indonesian intervention was in response to requests from the anti-communist groups in the territory, could be, and was, regarded in many quarters as an aggressive Indonesian expansionism" (p. 204). It should be added that despite a sustained campaign in the United Nations by Portugal and a number of developing countries, mostly from Africa, Indonesia is unlikely to hold a referendum on East Timor. East Timor, like Irian Jaya (Western New Guinea), has been incorporated as a province of Indonesia, and changing that is implausible at this time.

Countering this impression of Indonesian expansionist tendencies, Anwar reveals that "despite the strong conviction of Indonesia's regional importance, only a very small number of Indonesian elite members interviewed argued that ASEAN should be used as a vehicle for exercising Indonesian regional leadership" (p. 221).

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How, then, should the strategic role of an emerging Indonesia, with 200 million people gradually lifting themselves out of poverty, be viewed? Naturally, the fragility of Indonesian civil society and the historically determined power of the state make the country potentially easier prey for a demagogue than a constitutional democracy would be. The wrong leader could reverse Indonesia's progress, making the country a disruptive factor in Southeast Asia as it was during the last years of President Sukarno, from 1960 to 1965. Nevertheless, countries learn from their past mistakes, and a growing segment of Indonesia's population benefits from peace and the improving confidence of the international community.

Judging from Anwar's interviews, in the foreseeable future Indonesia should remain a stabilizing force, not only in Southeast Asia, but also on a broader global scale through its position in the Non-Aligned Movement and the Islamic world.

There is insufficient space for a thorough discussion of the realities of ASEAN economic cooperation, but mention should be made of the most recent ASEAN developments noted by Anwar, particularly the fact that, for the first time in its history, ASEAN, at its ministerial meeting in Manila in July 1992, issued a joint communiqué on the South China Sea (over which China claims sovereignty), thus making it a collective security issue. That is especially noteworthy for Indonesia, which is not one of the six countries with claims on the Spratly and Paracel Islands but seems willing to subordinate its traditional neutralism to regional stability.

Anwar, discussing Indonesian threat perceptions, reminds her readers that "the Suharto government, and particularly the military, regarded Communist China as the greatest potential threat to Indonesia's national security" (p. 208). But she also stresses that at the post-ministerial meeting in Manila in July 1992—when the six ASEAN foreign ministers were joined by their colleagues from the United States, Japan, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the European Economic Community, and South Korea—Russia and China were also invited, for the first time, to attend as official guests (p. 309). It can be argued that, with characteristic subtlety, Indonesia accepts China as a "dialogue partner," to use ASEAN terminology, while taking steps toward a new regime of regional collective security that makes clear that Indonesia opposes China's growing assertiveness in the region. Implicitly, that brings Indonesia closer to the strategic goals of the United States in the region.

Conclusion

Fifty years after proclaiming her independence on August 17, 1945, Indonesia appears in the pages of these books as a country that has taken gigantic strides into the modern world with its potential material rewards, in particular, education, health, and a gradual escape from poverty. Yet Indonesia still has a long way to go before overcoming the legacies of her past, namely,

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authoritarianism, superstition, and corruption. One hopes the transition will be achieved without loss of her rich cultural and ethical heritage.

New Players on the Mexican Scene

by George W. Grayson

First World, Ha Ha Ha! The Zapatista Challenge. Edited by Elaine Katzenberger. (San Francisco, Calif: City Lights, 1995. 258 pp. $10.95, paper.)

Shadows of Tender Fury: The Letters and Communiqués of Subcomandante Marcos and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation. Translated by Frank Bardacke et al. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1995. 272 pp. $15.00, paper.)

The Dynamics of Domination: State, Class, and Social Reform in Mexico, 1910–1990. By Viviane Brachet-Marquez. (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995. 251 pp. $59.95.)

The Paradox of Revolution: Labor, the State, and Authoritarianism in Mexico. By Kevin J. Middlebrook. (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Press, 1995. 463 pp. $59.95; $18.95, paper.)

The Paradox of the Mexican State: Rereading Sovereignty from Independence to NAFTA. By Julie A. Erfani. (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1995. 238 pp. $42.00.)

Just as wars, depressions, and other upheavals influence the arts when visited upon a country, so the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has profoundly shaped the art of politics in Mexico, according to several recent books.

NAFTA, which took effect on January 1, 1994, commits Mexico, the United States, and Canada to eliminating or, at least, reducing barriers to the flow of manufactured goods, agricultural products, financial and other services, and modes of transportation. As the most comprehensive free-trade pact in history, this trilateral accord also (1) protects patents, copyrights, and other intellectual property; (2) harmonizes health, safety, and industrial standards at the most rigorous level found in any of the three countries; (3) requires enforcement of national environmental laws; and (4) opens the door to safeguarding all North American workers against violations of child labor, minimum wage, and workplace health and safety statutes.

The agreement consolidated the opening of Mexico's economy, which had pursued import-substitution industrialization (ISI) since the 1940s. That strategy erected a soaring wall of tariffs, import permits, and quotas to protect domestic industries until they could compete with those in more advanced

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nations. ISI propelled the country's post–World War II "economic miracle." Yet by the mid-1970s, the spry, eager infant industries of the previous generation had grown lethargic, inefficient, whiny, and politically deft at retaining privileges. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, who donned the red, white, and green presidential sash on December 1, 1988, played the leading role in liberalizing Mexico's once cocooned economy. Before joining President Bill Clinton and Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney in signing NAFTA, Mexico's Harvard-educated President Salinas had slashed tariffs from 100 to 20 percent, jettisoned licensing requirements for 95 percent of the nation's goods purchased abroad, reduced subsidies on gasoline and other basic commodities, reprivatized the banking system, and sold off state-owned mining companies, airlines, and steel mills.

Though NAFTA offered the last best hope for achieving steady economic development for Mexico's rapidly growing population, the pact by no means made for the panacea that avid supporters had touted during debates over its adoption. Arguably, Washington and Ottawa negotiated too favorable a deal for themselves. As a result, Mexico found itself rewriting twenty-one economic-financial laws, even as its business community faced surging competition amid increasing acts of violence and social turbulence. Salinas deserves enormous credit for his unswerving commitment to change. Still, he largely colored by the numbers—sedulously adhering to an orthodox blueprint for reforming a grotesquely statist, corrupt, and sluggish economy.

No such prescription exists for the twin challenges that have faced his successor, Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León: first, implementing widespread, NAFTA-inspired economic and legal reforms, and secondly, opening up an authoritarian political system in the face of ever more aggressive pressure from domestic and foreign interest groups. Large corporations, particularly those that enjoy access to international financing, looked forward to prospering apace with liberalization. Despite the economic woes of 1995, their success may ultimately swell the ranks of Mexican billionaires above twenty-four (the number identified by *Forbes* magazine in 1994). But what will happen to the hundreds of thousands of small and medium-sized firms, long accustomed to protection, that lack affordable credit and technical assistance—and have yet to find a niche in the North American market? Such relatively labor-intensive industries as shoes, furniture, textiles, apparel, and toys have already suffered a record number of plant closings. The fate of the Mexican peasantry may prove even more problematic. Most communal farms—even if they enter into joint ventures, rent acreage, or sell parcels as permitted under a 1992 constitutional amendment—cannot compete with Cargill, Archer-Daniels-Midland, and other agro-giants scheduled to gain full entrée to the Mexican market by the year 2009. The campesino population, most of whom have little or no formal education, will double to 30 or 40 million in a generation.

Conceivably, some 10 million or so peasants could find employment in light manufacturing that neoliberal economists believe will flourish when middle-class Mexicans can buy more consumer goods, thanks to paying less for imported food. Market forces alone, however, will not generate employment for millions of rural inhabitants, particularly indigenous peoples consigned to

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poverty in their mud-and-thatch huts in the southern states of Yucatán, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Quintana Roo, and Chiapas.

Zapatista Guerrilla Theater

Even as Carlos Salinas co-produced, co-directed, and co-starred in the NAFTA performance that elicited standing ovations from many urban elites, Subcomandante Marcos took center stage in an anti–free trade production that opened in rural Chiapas on New Year's Day 1994, NAFTA's first day of operation. Specifically, the ski-masked Marcos and his Zapatista National Liberation Army (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional—EZLN), composed chiefly of Mayan soldiers, seized San Cristóbal de las Casas and a half-dozen other towns in river-rich, impoverished Chiapas, which lies cheek-by-jowl with Guatemala. In their "Declaration of the Lacandona Jungle," the insurgents framed a prologue:

> We are the product of five hundred years of struggle. . . . We are denied the most elementary education so that they [elites] can use us as cannon fodder and plunder our country's riches, uncaring that we are dying of hunger and curable diseases. Nor do they care that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, no decent roof over our heads, no land, no work, no health, no food, no education. We do not have the right to freely and democratically elect our own authorities, nor are we independent of foreigners, nor do we have peace or justice for ourselves and our children.
>
> But *today we say, enough!* We are the heirs of the people who truly forged our nation, we are the millions of the dispossessed, and we call on all of our brothers and sisters to join us on the only path that will allow us to escape a starvation caused by the insatiable ambition of a seventy-year-old dictatorship, led by a small inner clique of traitors who represent ultra-conservative groups ready to sell out our country (Bardacke et al., pp. 51–52).

At first, Salinas dispatched the army to suppress the ragtag EZLN. Press reports put the number of dead in twelve days of fighting at 150. The Zapatistas claimed to have killed at least twenty-seven army troops, while suffering nine deaths and twelve comrades lost in action. The government soon shifted to the political arena, firing the local supervisor of police and prisons (who had been linked to kidnappings arising from the Chiapas land conflicts that ignited the rebellion) and naming as its "commissioner for peace and reconciliation" Foreign Minister Manuel Camacho Solís, who had formerly served as mayor of Mexico City. In late January, Salinas demonstrated his range by presenting a package of electoral reforms, endorsed by the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional—PRI) and seven other political parties.

These measures created an independent authority to supervise campaigns and elections, prohibited any party's spending public funds, and established an office to prosecute alleged "electoral crimes." The proposals also embraced the fair treatment of all parties by the Mexican media, the recognition of the role of domestic and foreign observers in the August 1994 national

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elections (in which Zedillo captured the presidency), and the reduction of graft and sleaziness in political campaigns.

In *Shadows of Tender Fury,* the Monthly Review Press has provided a 272-page compendium of lines that Marcos—the enigmatic leading man affectionately known as "el Sub"—has delivered in letters and communiqués. In *First World, Ha Ha Ha!,* Elaine Katzenberger presents thirty-one essays, interviews, and poems about Marcos and other dramatis personae in the Chiapas arena, the artifices employed by the Zapatista movement, and the significance of guerrilla theater for Mexico and the world.

From these writings, we learn that Marcos was born to Spanish parents in north-central Mexico, studied at Mexico City's National Autonomous University, waited tables in San Francisco, drove a taxi in Texas, and has read widely—as evinced by his sophisticated references to pop culture, contemporary writers, and world news. He claims to have lived among the indigenous people of Chiapas for a decade.

Marcos's star quality obviated the need for his hiring a press agent. The black ski mask, through which he speaks softly, shrouded the thirty-something rebel in mystery. The Zapata-style bandolera—with red shotgun shells that do not match his AR-15 rifle—evoked images of Zapata, Sandino, Guevara, Arafat, and others adept at twentieth-century war by semantics. His rejection of drugs and alcohol suggested a purity in keeping with the seriousness of his mission: lifting the five-hundred-year-old yoke of oppression from the collective necks of the downtrodden to procure democracy for all Mexicans.

In contrast to grim-faced guerrilla actors in Nicaragua, Bolivia, and the Mideast, Marcos avoided ideological cant and grave dogmatic missives. Indeed, he showed promise as a comedian as well as a tragedian. A journalist asked: "When will you take off your mask?" Marcos responded: "If I take my mask off, there would be even more of a personality cult because I'm so good looking." He even presented fables for children, including the story of Durito, a glasses-wearing, pipe-puffing Marxist beetle with which he converses (Bardacke et al., pp. 191–93).

After the five-year run of the uncharismatic Salinas—known as the "atomic ant" for his type A personality—and a supporting cast of Ivy League economists, planners, and other technocrats, Marcos drew the media to Chiapas with the allure of secret rendezvous, blindfolds, multiple vehicle transfers, and poems as passwords. The *San Francisco Chronicle, Der Spiegel, Cambio 16, Le Figaro, Vanity Fair, 60 Minutes,* and scores of other media dispatched journalists to tap into the romance of the world's "first postmodern guerrilla leader," as the *New York Times* described him. At the same time, Marcos relied heavily on the Internet for EZLN pronouncements and his own poetic musings.

Theatrical flourishes aside, Marcos acquitted himself as much a realist as a romantic. He disclaimed pursuit of a military victory, comprehending that his guerrilla troupe could not defeat government troops that quickly encircled them. "No, the political system can't be the product of war," he averred. Rather, "the purpose of war is to open up space in the political arena so that people can really have a choice." In arguing for democracy and pluralism, he rebuked

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Castro, warning: "You criticize a totalitarian system and then offer another totalitarian system" (Katzenberger, p. 61).

These books' authors wildly cheer Marcos, who once described himself as "owner of the night, lord of the mountain, man without a face and with no tomorrow." In Katzenberger's work, artist/writer Guillermo Gómez Peña, for example, profiles him as "the latest popular hero in a noble tradition" that includes such "social wrestlers" as Mexico City shantytown activist Superbario, environmental advocate Super-Ecologista, and the wrestler/priest Fray Tormenta (p. 90).

Marcos is revealed to be a social reformer, a swaggering rebel, and a ham.

Novelist Elena Poinatowska praises the EZLN for giving women more than walk-on roles. *Guerrilleras* distinguished themselves as officers; female Zapatistas employed contraceptives; and the movement promulgated "Laws of Women" to encourage equality of females long kept backstage by males in the indigenous communities (pp. 99–107).

M.A. Jaimes Guerrero, an Arizona State University professor and Indian-rights advocate, identifies the Chiapas rebellion as "an American intifada," excoriates "colonizing" moves by the United States, warns against the danger posed by the "empire-building moguls" of the Trilateral Commission, and applauds the EZLN for its struggle against "the colonialist genocide, ethnocide, and ecocide that the First World powers and their political collaborators are perpetrating on them in their autochthonous homelands." For Professor Jaimes, Chiapas represents "the first armed battle against the Global Market place" (pp. 189–92).

Similarly, MIT linguist and noted leftist Noam Chomsky describes Chiapas as a reaction against "many factors driving global society toward a low-wage, low-growth, high-profit future, with increasing polarization and social disintegration." He laments the fading of democratic processes as nations vest more decision making in private institutions and quasi-governmental organizations, which—in the words of the *Financial Times*—constitute a "'de facto world government'" (p. 181).

Even well-heeled cosmopolites acclaimed Marcos and his entourage. During a performance of Verdi's potent, political *Nabuco,* an excited aficionado in the second balcony of the Bellas Artes auditorium shouted at the top of his lungs, "¡Qué Viven los Zapatistas!" From below, the elegantly coiffed and handsomely dressed audience responded, "¡Qué Viven!" (p. 87).

Such radical chic notwithstanding, the odds are long against Marcos's guerrilla theater playing successfully on the road—in other impoverished areas. Several factors related to Chiapas's uniqueness support this conclusion: the state's sizable indigenous population, the large influx of refugees from Guatemala and from other parts of Mexico, the corruption that has plagued the state, the particularly grinding poverty that Chiapans suffer, and the religious cross-currents that pit evangelical Protestants against the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church itself is torn between traditionalists and champions of liberation theology like Bishop Samuel Ruiz García, who had long extolled egalitarianism and Indian rights to the Tojolabal-, Tzelzal-, and Tzotzil-speaking populations of his diocese.

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Out of type, the churchman has played both a key role in the Chiapas drama and functioned as an interlocutor between the Zapatistas and their official audience. Regretfully, Katzenberger includes only a two-page interview with the redoubtable Bishop Ruiz, without whose ideas and encouragement the curtain might never have risen on the EZLN.

Marcos and his players enjoyed only a few months in the limelight. The army surrounded their rain-forest enclave. The government renounced repression for protracted parlays conducted by, in the subcomandante's words, a regime backed by "the same hard-liners who subterraneously encourage sabotage of the peace process by the big land owners and businessmen" (Bardacke et al., p. 183). And EZLN enthusiasts in Mexico City coffee houses shifted their gaze from the Lacandona to their Visa cards when interest rates soared to 90 percent amid a 6.9 percent fall in gross domestic product and 55 percent inflation in 1995. To diminish his appeal, the government identified Marcos as Rafael Sebastián Guillén Vicente, thirty-seven, a prize-winning sociology student and son of an upper-middle-class proprietor of furniture stores in Tampico. By early 1996, el Sub and his company voiced their readiness to abandon guerrilla theatrics for the more legitimate stage of traditional politics, even as Zedillo poured huge quantities of aid into Chiapas.

Shadows of Tender Fury provides readers with an insight into several sides revealed by Marcos: social reformer, swaggering rebel, prima donna, pragmatic politician, letter writer, and a ham forever mugging for the media. Once past San Francisco poet John Ross's hyperbolic introduction, the volume throws open a window on the abject poverty besetting the Chiapas mise en scène, the EZLN's eclectic voice, its negotiating stagecraft, and its overtures to women.

Katzenberger's book offers less to the reader. She provides neither rhyme nor reason for selecting the contributors, who range from a Leavenworth prisoner—"falsely accused" of shooting two FBI agents—to "a social historian of science and technics," to an internationally acclaimed novelist, to special pleaders for indigenous populations. The threads joining their essays and poems are sympathy for exploited Chiapans, claimed connections between the woes of indigenous communities throughout North America, disdain for Mexico's political system, virulent hostility toward the increasingly complex and globalized economy, and dewy-eyed fascination with revolution.

Peter Rosset, executive director of the Institute for Food and Development Policy—Food First, supplies the most interesting chapter. He clarifies the link between Chiapas and the international economy. The 1978–1982 oil boom attracted peasants to the nearby petroleum fields operated by Petróleos Mexicanos (Pemex), the state monopoly. Once the boom fizzled, the campesinos resumed farming, possessed for the first time of money with which to purchase chemical fertilizers and pesticides. The use of fertilizers ended the practice of rotating crops. Annual plantings then exhausted the soil and spurred erosion, and poor farmers found it increasingly difficult to scratch out an existence. Those enriched by petro-pesos became local bosses who lent money, owned trucks, rented land, and contracted for labor. That process exacerbated the heterogeneity of

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Chiapas villages and explains why privileged peasants show little enthusiasm for Marcos and the EZLN (pp. 157–67).

The questions Rosset asks are central to Mexico's future: "What sort of changes would be necessary to provide a decent life to the indigenous people of Chiapas and poor peasants throughout Mexico? Is peasant farming an anachronism that must disappear if we are to eliminate rural poverty?" (p. 166). Neither Salinas nor his successor has provided satisfactory answers. Still, NAFTA will not apply fully to agriculture for more than a decade. In the meantime, unionized workers face immediate insecurity.

Labor Symphony

If the Zapatistas evoke the image of guerrilla theater, the relationship between Mexico's unions and the government brings to mind a symphony concert. Although not stated as such, this image illuminates the themes of Viviane Brachet-Marquez's *The Dynamics of Domination* and Kevin J. Middlebrook's *The Paradox of Revolution*.

Brachet-Marquez, a Colegio de México sociologist, boldly rejects the idea that those who have seemed to conduct Mexico's "orchestra" (i.e., the union movement)—the president, the PRI, government agencies, and labor leaders when representing the state—actually set the terms for government-union relations. Instead, she argues that at critical junctures, presidents responded positively to pressures from union members to improve health and welfare benefits, lest the presidents' influence wane or members defect to an independent union. Her review encompasses six versions of the crisis-reform, temporary-stability "pact of domination"—a concept Brachet-Marquez defines as "the *institutionally sanctioned and coercively backed set of rules that specifies who gets what at any one time within the confines of a national territory*" (Brachet-Marquez, p. 33). She argues that union leaders like Fidel Velázquez, for fifty years head of the Confederation of Mexican Workers (Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos—CTM), are "active agents involved in the complex interactive dynamics of change—yielding here, resisting there—but always mindful of maintaining their position" (pp. 169–70). In most cases, she insists, the government provided salary increases, improved benefits, undertook greater participation in regulatory agencies, or expanded organizing opportunities to shore up the leader, minimize defections, or undercut tyros. As a result, "Mexico has been saved from more extreme forms of state repression and exclusion of subordinate classes—exemplified by Argentina and Chile—not by the strength of the state (as often assumed) but by its periodic vulnerability, and hence responsiveness to pressure from below" (p. 8).

The author deserves credit for providing a subtle portrait of "Don Fidel," as the ailing ninety-six-year-old Velázquez is known to friends and foes alike, and of other leaders of Mexican labor. Rather than reinforce the stereotype of sunglasses-wearing, paunchy martinets, Brachet-Marquez describes strong men trapped between competing forces. "These leaders can . . . be considered

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neither as state agents . . . nor authentic leaders of the rank and file . . . but as alternately playing both these roles, depending on their appreciation of their interests in given situations" (p. 170).

On occasions, rank-and-file agitation forced the government and its labor cohorts to change their policy. A prime example observed by Brachet-Marquez found President José López Portillo (1976–1982) conferring control of INFONAVIT, a workers' housing agency, on the CTM. Dominance over housing construction provided a "powerful instrument" to marginalize independent unions—extremely active in the 1970s—and to discipline workers subjected to wage restraints amid mounting inflation. In addition, López Portillo opened more space to opposition parties, especially those on the Left, to deflect their ideologically motivated activism toward political objectives and away from the bread-and-butter concerns of union members (pp. 144–46).

Still, this book's weaknesses eclipse its contributions. First, the author throws around terms like "labor," "capital," and "bourgeoisie" without sufficiently recognizing the heterogeneity of each construct. Secondly, she romanticizes the labor movement. After 1970, she writes, "the importance of organized labor must be understood not in terms of its ability to shake the system single-handedly (as in the past) but as a potential ally of malcontents in other sectors" (pp. 128–29). In fact, major unions have failed to forge alliances with the downtrodden because they are linked to the PRI, suffused with corruption, hostile to the fragmented and doctrinaire Left, and benefited by their members' receiving better (though declining) wages than most non-union workers.

Thirdly, Brachet-Marquez tends to confuse the musicians' tuning up with their performance. For instance, as evidence of grassroots agitation she cites calls for strikes, which are a dime a dozen and seldom lead to workers' actually hitting the bricks.

Fourthly, the author grossly underestimates the number of unionized workers, furnishes no evidence for the incredible assertion that 2 million people took part in a "gigantic *paro cívico* (civil strike)" in October 1983 (p. 154), pays scant attention to the importance of the underground economy as a social safety net, and—in dismissing the "top-down" analysis of state-union relations—fails to mention the extraordinary importance of such labor secretaries as Arsenio Farell Cubillas, who wielded an influential baton as a key Salinas cabinet member and has returned for an encore under Zedillo.

Fifthly, the author's animus toward top-down analyses blinds her to instances when the conductor fully dominated the musicians. For example, Salinas instituted a National Solidarity Program (PRONASOL) to construct clinics, schools, roads, and other highly visible social projects in villages, on communal farms, and in working-class sections of cities. Beneficiaries helped set priorities for their communities, while providing either pesos or sweat capital. Still, the "solidarity" initiative—inspired by the president's Harvard thesis—epitomized a venture conceived in Mexico City to soothe dislocations arising from economic liberalization. Salinas even toyed with the idea of crafting a "solidarity party" as a personal power base that would enable him to seek re-election in 1994 or 2000.

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Lastly, the University of Pittsburgh Press—one of America's premier academic publishers—has let down its author. Not only does the text lack the "wit and irony" promised on the dust cover by University of Texas professor Peter S. Cleaves, but the editors closed their eyes to a plethora of redundancies, awkward translations, unnecessary parenthetical insertions, names of insignificant agencies and programs, and cacophonous phrasings. Thus, Brachet-Marquez writes: "Finding neither pressures from below nor state responses to their plight, we must, therefore, declare a stalemate for our leading hypothesis, as far as labor was concerned" (p. 150).

Import substitution strengthened the regime's pact with labor.

By contrast, Middlebrook's 463-page study merits praise not only for its arrangement and execution but also for its intellectual stimulation. In examining organized labor's participation in politics and economic development from the 1920s through the early 1990s, the author focuses on state-centered factors as well as on society-centered factors. The advent of ISI exemplified the impact of both factors on labor's relationship with the post-revolutionary political establishment, for the strategy expanded official intrusion into the economy, including greater regulation of strikes and other union activities. At the same time, ISI strengthened the regime's social pact with labor. State economic involvement and restrictions on foreign investment dovetailed with "revolutionary nationalism," the eclectic doctrine espoused by Don Fidel, the CTM, and other PRI-linked union federations. Meanwhile, a highly protected economy buttressed by an activist public sector maximized labor's ability to procure higher wages, better contracts, and more generous social benefits in state enterprises.

Middlebrook highlights the symbiosis between the government and organized labor that crystallized around midcentury. For their part, successive presidents conferred a broad range of legal, financial, and political subsidies on the CTM and other official labor groups. At the same time, the regime used force to defeat dissident labor and political movements that challenged the position of favored organizations. Labor also took advantage of government-subsidized housing, health care, access to cheap basic commodities, and mandated profit-sharing. In Middlebrook's words, "Preferential access to these and other programs became an important basis for many labor leaders' legitimacy within their own organizations" (Middlebrook, p. 153).

In return, Velázquez and his colleagues discouraged discord, squashed strikes, rallied their forces behind ruling-party candidates, endorsed a closed system by which the incumbent chief executive personally chose his successor, mobilized support for presidential initiatives, and moderated wage demands so the government could curb inflation. Although not mentioned by Middlebrook, Don Fidel's commitment to revolutionary nationalism helped immunize the rank-and-file from Marxism, Castroism, and other radical ideologies.

Middlebrook disputes Brachet-Marquez's bottom-up theory. He points out that the top politicians' preponderance of power enabled them to define (and redefine) their alliance with labor. After all, the president and his cabinet

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secretaries provided legal, financial, and political subsidies; they recognized legitimate bargaining agents and supervised internal union activities; and they decided the legality of strikes. "As a result," Middlebrook observes, "'official' unions often lacked a well-developed organizational presence at the workplace level—a situation that further heightened their dependence on state-provided subsidies" (p. 154). Fear of an inability to manipulate new members may have diminished the interest of traditional labor leaders—often panned as *charros* (corrupt leaders) or *dinosaurios*—in organizing economic sectors where political allies could not ensure discipline.

Labor's subordinate role vis-à-vis the presidency became evident as Salinas radically switched themes from ISI to a neoliberal economic model. To begin with, the president recruited to prominent posts in his administration prodigies whose "backgrounds and expectations differed dramatically from those of the aging leaders of the 'official' labor movement" (p. 294), many of whom were personally linked to the 1910–17 revolutionary upheaval. In addition, despite advocating direct labor-management negotiations over wages and working conditions, the president assiduously discouraged strikes, sided with employers in labor disputes in the textile industry and at Volkswagen, and set upper limits on wage increases through the Pact for Stability and Economic Growth of January 1989.

Salinas also jailed powerful labor leaders—notably, Joaquín Hernández Galicia of the petroleum workers and Carlos Jonguitud Barrios of the teachers' union. At the same time, he backed Francisco Hernández Juárez, head of the telephone workers, and other men and women receptive to improved productivity, enterprise modernization, and flexible production techniques (p. 295). He moved to decentralize the petroleum industry and educational system, while backing the creation of the Federation of Goods and Services Unions, headed by Hernández Juárez—a man despised by Don Fidel. Velázquez also winced at the president's decision to give each worker control over the money in his housing account, formerly held by the CTM.

The asymmetry in government-labor relations manifested itself in Salinas's slashing more than 400,000 jobs in the mining, steel, metal-working, petroleum, railroad, and port industries. Even though labor productivity rose 2.5 percent annually between 1980 and 1992, manufacturing workers' real hourly compensation in 1992 amounted to only three-quarters of its 1979 level (p. 297).

Based on his consideration of Nicaraguan and Russian experiences in the 1980s, Middlebrook exudes pessimism about labor's role in shaping Mexico's political evolution. First, he notes that the shift away from ISI, the closing or privatization of hundreds of state-owned enterprises, and structural changes in the economy augur poorly for the size, composition, organizational success, and bargaining effectiveness of traditional unions. For instance, the most dynamic sector in the Mexican economy of the early 1990s was cross-border processing *(maquiladoras)*, an industry replete with young, mobile female workers resistant

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to organization.[1] Furthermore, as economic activity mushrooms in the anti-labor North, heavily unionized industrial centers in and around Mexico City will decline in importance. As Middlebrook notes,

> The owners of large manufacturing firms in Monterrey have successfully combined a well-developed tradition of employer paternalism (comparatively high wages and fringe benefits and an extensive network of company-sponsored social, educational, and recreational activities for workers and their families) with ruthless opposition to independent labor organizing in order to maintain a skilled, highly productive, and politically quiescent work force (p. 321).

Meanwhile, as Mexican entrepreneurs compete both nationally and internationally, they will have "even stronger incentives to maintain tight control over their work forces and resist union influence over the production process" than under ISI, when higher labor costs could be passed on to consumers (pp. 322–23). The introduction of work teams, quality circles, and other shop-floor innovations poses yet another challenge to traditional union leaders.

Secondly, the absence of a strong party ally militates against Mexican labor's playing a major role in the transition of its political system. Although paying lip service to its alliance with workers, the PRI under Salinas and Zedillo has shifted its base, favoring the "modern" middle classes at the expense of the "traditional" union movement. That position showed through in efforts to end automatic party membership for all members of official trade unions, in the reduction of labor's share of elective positions, and in moves to reform the 1970 Federal Labor Law. That statute specified (1) industry-wide collective bargaining agreements, (2) employment security, (3) compensation for a forty-eight-hour work week rather than for actual time worked, (4) employers' obligation to sign a collective contract when requested to do so by a legally recognized union, and (5) mandatory compensation for unjustified dismissal.

At the same time, the center-right National Action Party has failed to reach out to organized labor, although its candidates attracted blue-collar voters in the mid-1990s. For its part, the leftist Democratic Revolutionary Party has concentrated on short-term electoral strategies rather than establishing long-term bonds with worker organizations. As Middlebrook observes: "A more competitive post-transition political environment would perhaps encourage labor organizations to form closer links to political parties, but they would be more likely to achieve quality in this relationship if these ties were developed before the transition occurs" (p. 326).

Lastly, political controls on worker activities present the biggest obstacle to democratization in Mexico. The CTM and its counterparts have the worst of all worlds. Even as it modernizes, the PRI continues to depend on recognized labor officials to thwart strikes, intra-union protest movements, and other forms of worker assertiveness. Moreover, the post-NAFTA drive to increase competitiveness continues to excite proposals to modify the Federal Labor Law. The deep recession of 1995 enabled Velázquez to fight off changes in this voluminous

[1] The cross-border sector comprised some two thousand twin plants that carried out capital-intensive activities in the United States and labor-intensive work in Mexico.

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law. He and his successor will have greater difficulty manipulating the members when sustained growth resumes.

One can quibble with Middlebrook over several points. He downplays Velázquez's bravura performance in preserving Mexican stability; he overstates the post-ISI role of Mexico's risk-averse entrepreneurs as "leading promoters of economic growth"; and he fails to speculate on the prospect of much greater pluralism in the labor movement once Don Fidel leaves the scene. In the final analysis, however, the author has produced a magnum opus, against which scholars will evaluate future analyses of Mexico's labor movement.

The Political Soap Opera

In *The Paradox of the Mexican State,* Professor Julie A. Erfani of Arizona State University West presents the reader with a political soap opera. The heroine is the Mexican state; her lovers are President Lázaro Cárdenas and other paladins of public intervention in the economy to achieve a powerful state; the bad guys are capitalists, as well as Mexico's secretaries of budget and programming (who espouse neoliberalism) and anyone remotely sympathetic to NAFTA.

The scene opens at the time when Señorita México had won emancipation from her cruel Spanish foster parents. But independence proved a legal fiction. In fact, our innocent maiden suffered mightily within a nineteenth-century Eurocentric world that scorned her "inferior cultural status." Despite recognizing her independence in 1822, Washington began scheming to deprive her of a prized possession, Texas. This insult further typified her "inferior cultural-legal status" in international relations (p. 5).

Our heroine's fortunes improved dramatically after she weathered a violent crisis in the early 1900s. Thanks to an appreciation of her mixed European and Indian heritage, she sensed that she formed part of a "cosmic race." After the bloody 1910–17 revolution, her confidence soared in the 1920s and 1930s as new international principles declaimed the equality of all states, including the small and militarily weak. In fact, the rakish U.S. president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, maintained a relationship with her, even after she—assisted by the daring Cárdenas—seized U.S. and European oil companies operating on her hacienda. Cárdenas enhanced her power and sovereignty through greater activism, including uplifting the workers and peasants laboring on her lands. That trend continued in the 1950s, as our increasingly self-possessed damsel built walls around her estate—ISI—to thwart the entry of foreign businessmen and their goods.

All proceeded smoothly. Then—the camera zooms in—evil men came, wearing green eye-shades and brandishing Ivy League degrees. These *técnicos,* denizens of the Secretariat of Budget and Programming, ridiculed her condition, weakening her self-image. Instead of interventionism and autarky, they urged tumbling the protective barriers, welcoming commerce with all comers, rolling out the red carpet for foreign investors, and unleashing market forces. Even worse, they hoodwinked Señorita México, promising to transport her from the

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Third to the First World if she would just sign an agreement with her U.S. and Canadian cousins to join their three properties into a single trading zone. As it turned out, that document "privileges" outsiders over our winsome lass in areas of property rights, investment, trade, and commerce—without improving wages, welfare, and environment on the homestead. Is there no hope? Perhaps masked rebels from Chiapas can somehow spark a movement to restore the autonomy and popular sovereignty once enjoyed by our heroine.

The absurdity of this soap opera pales in comparison with the nonsense pervading *The Paradox of the Mexican State.* To begin with, Erfani confuses the abstraction of "sovereignty" with the ability of a state to mobilize the resources necessary to defend its interests. Doubtless, many U.S. and European leaders viewed Mexico as culturally inferior in the last century. But multiple interventions arose less from racism and arrogance than from kaleidoscopic changes in government during most of the country's first half century of legal independence.

In a similar vein, Roosevelt eschewed intervention after the 1938 expropriation of foreign oil companies for pragmatic reasons—not because of heightened "international respect for Mexico's territorial integrity and constitutional independence" (p. 10). On the one hand, FDR wanted "good neighbors" in the Western Hemisphere amid the rise of fascism and Nazism in Europe. On the other hand, he felt no love for affluent, Republican oil executives, and he feared that U.S. military intervention might prompt Mexico's takeover of American silver holdings.

One can only say "poppycock" to Erfani's contention that "NAFTA perpetuates the Mexican state's sovereign legal authority over average Mexican citizens while simultaneously implying that the state need not and should not wield sovereign power to protect such citizens" (p. 179). Salinas argued that continuation of ISI provided a blueprint for stagnation and social turmoil. Only through liberalized trade could Mexico increase competitiveness, sell more goods and services abroad, provide better products for domestic consumers, combat inflation, and improve living standards for 90 million citizens. Furthermore, no matter what politicians did to accelerate or slow integration, the Mexican and U.S. economies were inexorably merging. Better to have the process take place within the framework of clearly delineated rules than in an ad hoc fashion. Lastly, the author is simply wrong when she asserts that "Mexico was essentially inducted into a regional trade and investment club under the implicit assumption that Mexico could and would soon be economically equal to the United States and Canada" (p. 174).

Erfani shows her naïveté about Mexico's political system by stating that Zedillo, as campaign manager for Luis Donaldo Colosio Murrieta, "further alienated and undermined party *políticos* as the campaign proceeded" (pp. 170–71). In reality, Zedillo held the title of manager without the responsibility for directing the campaign. The candidate's confidants above and below Zedillo ran the show until a gunman assassinated Colosio on March 23, 1994.

The writer's innocence in economic matters ends up surpassed only by her inability to express herself in clear, precise, and compelling English—a goal

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that Lynne Rienner's editors must not prize. On page 174 Erfani states, "NAFTA rhetoric, on the other hand, mythologizes the economic magic of a transcontinental invisible hand driven by a private sector powerful enough to reverse the national economic disaster of Mexico's mixed-economic past." Seven pages later she contends, "In that respect, NAFTA perpetuates Mexico's ongoing integration and disintegration as a nation-state, albeit with nineteenth century-style fragmentation trends instead of twentieth century-style political unity and stability" (p. 181). Such lines generate sympathy for our heroine and for those required to read this book.

Central America Departs Center Stage

by Edward A. Lynch

The Guerrilla Wars of Central America: Nicaragua, El Salvador & Guatemala. By Saul Landau. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993. 222 pp. $35.00.)

The Struggle for Peace in Central America. By Dario Moreno. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994. 251 pp. $39.95; $19.95, paper.)

States and Social Evolution: Coffee and the Rise of National Governments in Central America. By Robert G. Williams. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994. 357 pp. $45.00; $15.95, paper.)

Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America. Edited by Donna Lee Van Cott. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994. 271 pp. $45.00.)

The New Politics of Survival: Grassroots Movements in Central America. Edited by Minor Sinclair. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1995. 301 pp. $15.00.)

Central America has slipped off the front pages and mostly disappeared from the inside pages of American newspapers. For all intents and purposes, the wars that convulsed the region from 1979 to 1992 are over. With the end of these wars and what was a necessary U.S. preoccupation with the area over the last two decades, it is time to speculate about the future of Central America and comment briefly on the likely place of the isthmus in U.S. foreign policy.

During the cold war, Central America's internal politics were distorted almost beyond recognition. Some traditional political disputes, both internal and international, went into abeyance; others found new life and became microcosms of the cold war. No Central American political occurrence, however, was left on its own during the 1980s. Even the most minute feuds and quarrels were discussed in Washington, Havana, Moscow, Mexico City, and elsewhere, either

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by government officials looking for an advantageous opening or by curious spectators trying to predict the future.

For most of these outside observers, there was a tendency to lump the Central American republics together and to think regionally. Prior to their immersion in cold war competition (1979 makes a convenient starting point), Central Americans tended to emphasize their differences more than their similarities. Even slightly knowledgeable foreigners perceived the immense political differences between democratic Costa Rica and authoritarian Guatemala, and the economic contrast between prosperous El Salvador and destitute Honduras.

For the purposes of this essay, "Central America" refers to the five successor states of the nineteenth-century Central American Union. These are Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. These five states constituted a single administrative unit under Spanish rule. All became independent around the same time and have many political and cultural features in common. While Panama is of great importance to the United States, its history is too different (its independence, for example, came one hundred years later and under vastly different circumstances) and its politics too unusual to permit its inclusion in Central America. Belize, a former British colony that received its independence in 1981, has almost nothing in common with its neighbors.

The foreign policy of Central American political leaders during the pre-1979 period focused on dealings with one another rather than with the rest of the world. With regard to the United States, Central Americans' most fervent goal was to avoid political or economic domination. American ignorance of the region served that cause, although not completely.

Central America was never entirely ignored by U.S. policymakers. While presidents, secretaries of state, and congressmen were otherwise occupied, U.S. foreign policy toward Central America was left to middle- and low-level bureaucrats. Invariably, their priority was regional stability. The preferred method to bolster stability was to promote subservience, so that obstreperous Central American leaders could be persuaded to act in accord with the wishes of U.S. officials.

State Department bureaucrats did not always get their way, however. Some Central American leaders tried mightily to avoid the trap, sometimes by pursuing economic growth on their own and sometimes by promoting regional economic integration. The history of U.S. relations with Central America before 1979 is largely the interplay of nationalistic Central Americans and domineering Americans. Now that Central America is once again the province of the permanent bureaucracy, the same sort of interplay will likely resume.

Both sides will find the playing field substantially altered, however. Having had their fill of U.S. meddling, today's Central American leaders are more determined than ever to chart their own course. The presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala (Nicaragua is a special case) are embracing neoliberal economics (to varying degrees) in order to bring economic growth to their countries and thus avoid giving the Americans diplomatic leverage.

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At the same time, all of Central America is democratic. As the political space in the region has increased, non-government organizations have sought to occupy it. Interest groups made up of workers, business owners, Indians, women, students, professionals, religious groups, and others have one goal in common: to limit the intrusions of their own governments on private prerogatives. These independent social groups will multiply as economies grow, reinforcing their political mission.

The success of neoliberal economics and political devolution will determine the extent to which Central America's republics are able to attain, and maintain, cherished independence. Put differently, these processes are the factors that will make the future of Central America different from its past. Thus, books on economic development and political diversification are most important and interesting as Central America enters a new era.

The Aftermath of War

For better or for worse, however, that new era will include the legacy of the 1979–1992 crisis, when most of the region was at war. It will be useful, therefore, to evaluate recent works on that period before moving on to works that focus on the future.

A number of books on Central America insist, not only on rehashing the past fifteen years, but also on revising the history of that period. Such a revisionist book is Saul Landau's *The Guerrilla Wars of Central America: Nicaragua, El Salvador & Guatemala.*

Besides an unusually blatant hatred for Ronald Reagan, this book has several distinctive features. Most important is Landau's insistence that everything bad that has ever happened in Central America is the fault of American officials. He criticizes U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick for blaming all the isthmus's ills on the Soviet Union, "dismissing even the possibility that Central American [violence] could have had its roots in social inequities" (p. 3).

The author is much more resolved to condemn the United States, however. Landau asserts that Central American leaders formed peace plans in the 1980s, "not because of a Soviet threat, but because they feared U.S. leaders would once again send troops south of the Rio Grande" (p. 4). That the leaders of Central America simply wanted peace seems not to have occurred to him. The section "The Creation of the Counterrevolution" (p. 37) gives no hint of any initiative by Nicaraguans, nor any "social inequities" under the Sandinistas, that might have generated armed revolt. The entire contra war flowed from malevolence in Washington and Miami.

Yet for Landau, the evil Americans are also stupid. From the Bay of Pigs to the contra war, U.S. policy has been inept and counterproductive. Some embarrassing questions arise from such a doctrine: How can the United States be both inept and fearsome? How can U.S. officials simultaneously be incompetent and determine Central America's politics? And what does it mean for a communist revolution when it loses every isthmian war against such an incapable opponent,

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while non-communist revolutionaries in Eastern Europe and South Africa, who faced tougher odds, all won?

Landau's evident anger causes him to miss some intriguing possibilities in U.S. relations with Central America. He notes, correctly, that the contras should have had more success in Nicaragua by 1985. They did not, supposedly because U.S. officials launched a war of attrition (again, nothing important has a Central American origin). He attributes the attrition strategy to ineptness, without considering three alternative explanations: first, that U.S. officials desired a long and destructive war to impoverish Nicaragua; secondly, that the Reagan administration was divided on the issue and that internal debate damaged the contra cause; or, lastly, that the contras' difficulties arose from fighting the largest and best-equipped army in Central America.

Along the same lines, he says that Washington failed to notice that the supposedly reformist junta that took over El Salvador in 1979 was run by "ultra-right" army officers. Landau concludes that U.S. officials were "very naive" (p. 82). More likely, some U.S. officials backed sham Salvadoran reformists, knowing that it would lead to a rise of the revolutionary Left and force the government of El Salvador to beg for American assistance.

Landau does point out that, until 1979, El Salvador had remained free of U.S. military intervention, and that the country had become wealthy enough to spark resentment and fear in Honduras, its poorer neighbor. Is it not possible that Landau's evil American officials wanted a long civil war to short-circuit El Salvador's prosperity? For Landau, American officials were simply not smart enough to think of that. Landau does not even consider a more likely possibility: that El Salvador's relative wealth attracted Soviet-backed guerrillas. However much credence is put in these two possibilities, they at least assume rationality on the part of major actors. Landau should have examined them before accusing U.S. officials of rank foolishness.

It is unfortunate that Landau makes such an issue of U.S. ineptness in a book that has more than its share of literary ineptness. Zbigniew Brzezinski's name is rendered "Brzinski." Liberal Catholic churchmen were "sewing the seeds" of revolution in the 1970s. Nicaraguan "ex-patriots" schemed in Miami. Landau's obsession with Reagan causes him to blame the Reagan administration for things that happened in 1980, before Reagan even took office.

Landau's fixation also prevents him from making any useful analysis of the region's future, now that Reagan is out of office and the wars are over. This book is focused entirely on the past and on the search for facile conspiracy theories to explain that past. Landau reveals that Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza "graduated from West Point. His older brother, Luis, attended Louisiana State University, the University of California and the University of Maryland" (p. 19). Anyone inclined to respond "So what?" will not find an answer here.

Landau's book notwithstanding, an analysis of Central America in the 1980s can be helpful in anticipating the future. The proof is Dario Moreno's *The Struggle for Peace in Central America*. Moreno concentrates on the actions and policies of the presidents of Central America, treating them as independent actors.

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He notes in his preface: "Despite their small size and weak economies, the Central American states were able on several occasions to frustrate U.S. policy toward Central America" (p. x). Unlike Landau, Moreno sees the 1980s Central American crisis as multidimensional and shows that many actors, from within and without the region, interacted to end the guerrilla wars.

According to Moreno, the most important Central American actor, indeed the most important actor overall, was Costa Rican president Oscar Arias Sánchez. His famous peace plan succeeded, the argument goes, because he recognized two things: first, that the destinies of Central America's five states are inextricably intertwined, making peace in the region indivisible; and secondly, that the central threats to this peace involve both the domestic and foreign policies of the Central American states.

Arias succeeded because he recognized Central American peace was indivisible.

His analysis convinced Arias that internal political reform was vital to regional peace. At the various Central American presidential summits that he attended, he convinced his counterparts that they should be required to open up their internal political system. Such democratization would remove not only the root causes of violence but also the rationale for outside intervention.

Moreno convincingly makes the case that Central American states already faced serious limits to their sovereignty. Thus, the Arias system, with its strict requirements for specific and verifiable compliance, did not deprive Central American states of sovereignty. Rather, it provided an opportunity to gain self-determination by forestalling foreign intervention.

Unlike many authors on Central America, Moreno recognizes that intervention came not only from the United States but also from others, including other Latin American states. He notes that the government of El Salvador, for example, "was opposed not only by guerrillas with close ties to Cuba and Nicaragua, but also by a non-violent opposition with close ties to Mexico and France" (p. 24). He contends that the Contadora process—the 1983–85 Central American peace initiative of Panama, Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia—was more an effort by those countries to replace U.S. hegemony in Central America with their own than it was a serious effort to restore peace. Not incidentally, Contadora failed to link Central America's domestic and foreign policies. For both these reasons, the process had a "long, sad history" (p. 55).

It is fortunate that Moreno spends most of his book on the actions of Central American leaders, because one of the book's flaws is its treatment of the Reagan administration. He says baldly, "The goal of Reagan's Central America policy was to restore U.S. hegemony in the region" (p. 50). There are three serious problems here. First, Moreno does not show that this hegemony was ever lost and thus in need of restoration. Secondly, there was no such thing as "Reagan's Central America policy," if that means a coherent and singular approach to the area (Moreno interviewed enough people from the administration to know that). Lastly, what Reagan wanted in Central America was virtually the same as what Arias wanted, which is why the administration embraced his plan

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in 1987. Reagan and Arias were not on opposite sides, although they disagreed on details and timing. It is best to pay little heed to Moreno's portrayal of Reagan and concentrate instead on his treatment of the Central Americans.

After Arias, the most interesting actor is Vinicio Cerezo of Guatemala, who first noted that the Contadora process was doomed and that the Central American presidents should meet alone. Cerezo reported to his congress that his first summit, the 1986 Esquipulas meeting, might "'create a regional organization . . . which will contribute to regional detente'" (p. 76).

Central American summits became common as the 1980s ended and, what is more important, have continued since the fighting has decreased. (Moreno's book contains the final documents of eight of these summits; these alone make the book worth having.) The author notes that "the focus of regional diplomacy moved away from political and security issues and concentrated instead on common economic problems" (p. 128). That outcome is the culmination of Arias's vision, made possible only because all Central American nations are now democratic.

The one flaw in Moreno's central thesis is his unsubstantiated confidence in the ability of Central Americans to keep an eye on one another without undue interference. The author alludes to the historic "Central American disease," meaning the chronic interference of the isthmian states in one another's affairs. He later praises the Arias peace plan, which called for simultaneous demilitarization and democratization, all requiring monitoring, verification, and, possibly, interference. Why was that a "disease" in Central America before and a boon now? All that has changed is the structure of Central America's regimes. Unfortunately, democratic elections do not guarantee that leaders will be free from excessive ambition or penchants for interference.

With the region's wars all but over and economic problems compelling cooperation, the future of Central America will likely revolve around the success or failure of political and economic integration. Central America's leaders must learn to interact but not interfere.

Learning from the Past

Central America has experienced periods of political isolation before, periods that also featured important political and economic changes. Such times offer clues to the future. To predict the region's future, therefore, scholars must examine its past.

Robert G. Williams has written a useful book on the political and economic effects of the coffee boom in Central America. In *States and Social Evolution: Coffee and the Rise of National Governments in Central America,* the author examines in detail the process through which coffee was established as the major export crop in Central America. That occurred at the same time that national states with actual authority appeared in Central America. According to traditional dependency theory, the international capitalist system (always a

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single-minded actor for dependency theorists) subverted these national governments into local agents for a global coffee conglomerate.

Williams shows, however, that modes of production, cultivation, harvesting, and distribution of coffee differed significantly throughout Central America, from El Salvador and Nicaragua, where huge coffee plantations with armed guards and overt government sponsorship predominated, to Honduras, where small, family-owned farms far outnumbered large coffee plantations. This fact alone is enough to support Williams's conclusion: "The focus of causation spinning in one direction—outward from the center—is woefully inadequate" (p. 40).

The author makes it quite clear that market forces, in all of their unpredictability and circumstantial specificity, drove the move to coffee in Central America 150 years ago. In most of the region, coffee production had to wait until traditional crops, such as indigo, were no longer profitable. Furthermore, farmers in other parts of Central America waited until coffee demonstrated its profitability in Costa Rica before they made the switch.

Because coffee requires a large labor force, especially at harvest time, and because willing labor was simply not available in most of Central America, coffee planters in some countries used coercion. Elsewhere, planters had to pay workers well. That is, they had to provide a market incentive. Labor availability is one of the factors that makes the Central America coffee landscape so varied. Foreign investment flows were also uneven and, for the most part, driven by purely local conditions (p. 191).

What efforts there were to suppress market forces (and substitute physical force) were also primarily local. Williams describes the process through which coffee planters sought, and got, control of local governments, except in Honduras, and "only as the limits of accumulation within the boundaries of the townships were reached, coffee elites pressured for higher levels of government to intervene on their behalf" (p. 239). In other words, the drive to make governments act on behalf of large-scale coffee planters came from Central Americans, not from the evil United States.

Central American coffee barons first induced governments to make common or Indian-held land available for private ownership. In El Salvador and Nicaragua, governments used force. Such government actions also had the benefit (for the growers) of making formerly prosperous peasants into landless laborers, addressing the labor shortage. Along with Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador came closest to the dependency theorists' stereotype of a suborned Third World government.

But even here, Williams points out, the planter-government relationship was not all one-sided. As the coffee elites took direct control of governments, members of these elites fought among themselves, to everyone's loss. To stop that, the elites retired from direct control and created professional bureaucracies. Bureaucrats quickly became actors in their own right, favoring some planters over others and forcing a significant turnover in the coffee elite, especially in Guatemala and Nicaragua. In that and other ways, bureaucrats generally became a nuisance for the planters.

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The exception to this dreary process was Honduras, where small family farms predominated and still predominate in the coffee industry. It is not surprising that Honduras was most successful in postponing the development of an active and interventionist central government. Thus, the weakest central government in Central America was best able to resist the pressures to replace family farms with large, capitalist agro-businesses. Honduras is also the poorest country in Central America, however. It is therefore an imperfect model for its neighbors. Honduras's experience reminds us that if foreign investment brings danger, there is little benefit in fending it off too completely.

Williams illustrates his telling points with graphs, charts, and photos. These visual aids underscore the enormous regional differences in Central American coffee growing, differences that were rooted in local tradition and apparently impervious to the machinations of the dependency theorists' imaginary international capitalist overlords. Even if these manipulative capitalists really existed, the history of coffee in Honduras would tellingly depict the flaws of dependency theory.

States and Social Evolution reveals as much of the state of academic literature on Latin America as it does the fine work of Williams. It makes points that should have become standard wisdom long ago: that market forces are important but not irresistible; that the economies of Central America have significant differences; and, perhaps most important, that empowering government to act on your own economic behalf is a risky undertaking that may backfire. It is not Williams's fault that he states the obvious. It is the profession's fault that the obvious is so surprising.

Trends Worth Watching

While Williams does not speculate about the future, he induces his readers to do so. Perhaps past is prologue. Absent the cold war, Central American states had some important economic traits in common but developed in their own way, at their own pace. Local governments were important, central governments were often secondary, and non-government organizations found substantial space to influence policy. Citizens of different nations found that they had less in common with many of their countrymen than they did with those across borders engaged in similar activities.

When the region found itself the center of global superpower competition, it also found itself saddled with foreigners repulsed by its diffuse political and social arrangements. Absent attention from these foreigners, local differences and cross-country connections will reappear. The earliest international links will likely be among Indians, who have less commitment than most to existing political arrangements.

One of several new books on the place of Latin American Indians in the continent's political systems is *Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America,* edited by Donna Lee Van Cott. This collection of essays, like Dr.

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Watson in *The Hound of the Baskervilles,* is most useful in providing erroneous conclusions that inadvertently point the way toward useful evidence for analysis.

The authors treat the effect of spreading democracy in Latin America on indigenous populations. Van Cott posits that, since democratization, "the hemisphere's estimated 40 million indigenous people experienced a cultural renaissance and a political awakening that questioned the legitimacy of the newly democratic nation-states." In spite of this reawakening, civilian governments have sought to exclude Indians from politics, postponing, in Van Cott's view, the "creation of a broadly democratic society" (p. 2).

She does not explain how that principle applies to a country like El Salvador, where Indians make up less than 5 percent of the population. The exclusion of such a small group, even if it were deliberate, and the authors do not prove that it is, cannot significantly affect the breadth of democracy in El Salvador. In spite of this analytical lacuna, the book is a useful account of the success of some (mostly local-based) indigenous organizations, either in winning political rights, protecting culture, or promoting economic progress for Indians.

Although all of the authors condemn "paternalism" toward Indians from past and present Latin American governments, some contributors engage in paternalistic thinking themselves. Alison Brysk begins her article with a restrictive and exclusionary definition of indigenous organizations: "The Indian rights movement does not refer to all forms of political participation by Indians, but rather to groups working for change in the status and conditions of Indians as a distinct cultural group" (p. 31).

Most of her colleagues agree that it is self-evident that the proper path for indigenous organizations is leftward, toward socialism. Van Cott condemns Latin American military governments, especially Guatemala's, for assuming that indigenous organizations worked hand in glove with the Left, then notes that indigenous movements are split over ethnic versus "classist" emphases, the latter advocating "solidarity with the left" (p. 15). Van Cott dismisses without mention the possibility that Indians might find common ground with conservatives, or that Indians might be sufficiently sophisticated to adhere to varied political ideologies.

In almost every chapter, however, it becomes clear that indigenous groups that shun the Left, and shun governments altogether, have the greatest success. Even the father of Rigoberta Menchú—the radical Guatemalan woman who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992—found that when he linked his Committee of Unified Country People with Guatemala's communist insurgents, he "provoked opposition from more ethnically oriented Maya over whether [their] problems should be seen as fundamentally class and not ethnic issues" (p. 163). Brysk cannot hide the growing tension between indigenous organizations and socialist-oriented environmental groups, whom she thinks are natural allies.

In Colombia, by contrast, Indians have won "structural [political] reforms of great interest and benefit," as a result of organizing autonomous and independent pressure groups at the local level (p. 83). In Brazil, positive changes in the 1988 constitution are due in large part to the "multiplication" of independent

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Indian societies (p. 229). Even more significant is that non-government Indian organizations work together across national boundaries. Brysk notes that Nicaragua demarcated Miskito Indian land after pressure from the transnational Indian movement (p. 30).

In some cases, Latin American governments have anticipated the strength of genuinely independent organizations (indeed, they seem to have anticipated it better than most of the contributors to this volume). Centralizing governments have tried to co-opt Indian movements and turn them into government agencies. The chapters on Ecuador, Mexico, and Paraguay revolve around the Indians' successful efforts to fend off these velvet-gloved attacks. Oddly, the authors do not criticize such attacks as "paternalistic." They also ignore the abuse of the Atlantic Coast Indians by the Sandinistas and fail to mention that regime's sedulous attempts to subvert and supplant independent Miskito human-rights organizations.

Indigenous organizations that shun the Left have the greatest success.

The Indians' insistence on their own organizations, without ties to even sympathetic governments, promises greater success in the future. With the trend in Latin America toward devolution and decentralization of government power, indigenous organizations will be well positioned to negotiate with state and local governments, private businesses, and other autonomous interest groups in defense of their economic and cultural rights.

For the most part, *Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America* documents that fascinating trend but does not analyze it, and rarely even notes it. However, the book performs its documenting function quite well, given its appendices of original source material and its index. Thus, the book's readers may well get more from its pages than the authors did.

A similarly useful volume is *The New Politics of Survival: Grassroots Movements in Central America,* edited by Minor Sinclair. The book's rationale is expressed in the introduction: in contrast with Central America's guerrilla wars, "all but overlooked has been the unarmed aspect of the struggle, the role of popular organizations engaged in . . . largely unarmed actions of resistance" (p. 2). Like Van Cott, the authors document the rise of non-government organizations. These will be important in Central America's future, though not for the reasons given by the contributors.

The authors betray a restrictive definition of a key term, in this case "popular." Mario Lungo Uclés begins his article by explaining the meaning of popular: "characterized by an identification with social transformation in economic, political, cultural, and social terms that benefits the marginalized. Those who act for social justice identify with and make up the popular movement" (p. 153). All of the authors in this study emphasize left-wing popular movements almost exclusively, while providing compelling evidence that adopting a leftist stance all but dooms a "popular movement" to unpopularity.

Like many treatments of Central America in the 1980s, *The New Politics of Survival* leaves no room for doubt about the goodness or evil of the various actors. Rigoberta Menchú describes the plight of Guatemalan peasants, seemingly including herself in their number: "The only food we receive is a few pounds

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of corn per week which is deducted from our wages. . . . Often the corn is from the previous year's harvest and infested with insects" (p. 48). In El Salvador, apparently, the rich are equally black-hearted towards the poor. Martha Thompson writes: "For the powerful sectors of Salvadoran society, the lives of the poor and marginalized have little human value and, therefore, killing them poses no moral dilemma" (p. 111).

Surprisingly, the author herself seems to have little more regard for Central American peasants than her purported rich Salvadorans. Thompson expresses surprise that Salvadorans returning after the 1992 peace accord set up their own local governments and "began to believe in their worth and ability to think and act for themselves." She asks, incredulously, "How did campesinos who had lived much of their lives treated by the government as if they were expendable . . . begin to plan and develop communities?" (p. 111).

The answer is that peasants simply ignored what their government thought and never sought affirmation from the government. The authors would realize that if they paid closer attention to their own evidence. Menchú recounts a 1978 national assembly of grassroots leaders from many regions of Guatemala, at which a national campesino organization was founded. Sinclair himself, writing on Guatemala, speaks of the indigenous survivors of army massacres "organiz[ing] local self-government councils, an educational system for children and adults, basic health care and a communitarian system of production" (p. 75). These are rather impressive activities for a population living at the level of terror described in these same articles, where asking for insect-free corn can get you massacred.

In fact, grassroots political, social, and economic movements in Central America have existed for centuries, as peasants pursue the prudent policy of doing for themselves and having as little to do with government as possible. This practice, the real "politics of survival," eludes the authors of this study, for whom true grassroots movements are only those of the Left.

Yet Sinclair notes in the introduction that newer grassroots movements reject class identification and class struggle. All four articles on Nicaragua recount that grassroots movements in that country had to fight, hard, to maintain their independence and integrity in the face of constant Sandinista assaults.

But the authors miss the significance of that. Grassroots movements must be independent, even of (especially of) supposedly sympathetic political movements, to be effective instruments for their members. In the future, such movements will thrive as Central American governments implement neoliberalism and turn over functions and activities to local governments and to the people. For evidence of that, look no further than *The New Politics of Survival.* Lungo Uclés asserts that genuinely independent grassroots movements in El Salvador "challenged the dominant classes in a way that the guerrilla insurgency never could" (p. 171).

That is why repressive Central American governments, from Guatemala's on the right to Nicaragua's on the left, have targeted independent social groups for either physical annihilation or co-optation. The authors are correct in thinking

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that the health of grassroots organizations indicates the health of a polity. If only they knew why.

Conclusion

Both independent social groups and the free market erode the power of central governments and should prevent the recurrence of widespread political repression as Central America enters the twenty-first century. The failure of either of these institutions to take hold will signal danger, if for no other reason than because they are mutually reinforcing. An administration hostile to the interest groups or the market, whether it appears in Central America or Washington, will be able to do considerable harm. Central Americans can do little to prevent that from happening in the United States, but they can solidify their newfound independence by working more closely together through regional organizations.

Internal political devolution and international economic integration are also mutually reinforcing. That sounds paradoxical only to those who assume that the initiative for integration must come from governments. With indigenous movements showing the way, Central American independent social groups will create their own cross-national links, which will complicate international relations in the isthmus. Such political and economic cacophony will also make it more, not less, difficult for foreigners, including U.S. State Department officials, to dominate the region. The example of the Honduran family-owned coffee farms is worth recalling. Neither the domestic nor the international coffee elite gained control of the Honduran government. American foreign-policy makers should recognize that there is a connection between disorder and freedom, and look favorably on both.

Scholars interested in the area must also be prepared to think in new ways, and even to accept a diffuse disorder in Central America's politics and economics that will make regionwide analysis more difficult. The only alternative is to place Central Americans into categories, or societies, that they would rather not inhabit.

Environmental Fevers and Cold Facts

by Patrick Clawson

The Ends of the Earth: A Journey at the Dawn of the 21st Century. By Robert Kaplan. (New York: Random House, 1996. 476 pp. $27.50.)

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The True State of the Planet. Edited by Ronald Bailey. (New York: The Free Press, 1995. 472 pp. $15.00, paper.)

The State of Humanity. By Julian Simon. (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995. 694 pp. $54.95.)

But Is It True? A Citizen's Guide to Environmental Health and Safety Issues. By Aaron Wildavsky. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995. 574 pp. $35.00.)

A Moment on the Earth: The Coming Age of Environmental Optimism. By Gregg Easterbrook. (New York: Viking, 1995. 745 pp. $27.95.)

The Politics of Global Atmospheric Change. By Ian Rowlands. (New York: Manchester University Press, 1995. 276 pp. $69.95; $29.95, paper.)

Managing the Global Commons: The Economics of Climate Change. By William Nordhaus. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994. 213 pp. $32.50.)

The Clinton administration came into office as a wave of concern was building about the impact that environmental problems could have on national security. Vice President Al Gore, known as a moderate, entitled his best-selling book *Earth in the Balance* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1992) to indicate how precarious is the future of our planet. Gore relied heavily on the work of University of Toronto political scientist Thomas (Tad) Homer-Dixon, who argued that political conflict (from civil wars to border clashes and full-scale invasions) was more and more often caused by environmental issues.[1] It became fashionable in Washington to argue that environmental security is more important for the future of the United States than traditional military security. Groups like the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Woodrow Wilson Center of the Smithsonian Institution set up working groups on the topic.

These concerns were translated into changes in government policy. A new priority was given to environmental issues, with a reorganization of the State Department to elevate "global issues" (meaning democracy and the environment, in the broadest sense) to an equal of political issues. The Defense Department acquired an assistant secretary for environmental security. The Central Intelligence Agency reprogrammed resources towards environmental problems instead of analyzing rogue states. Intelligence satellites were reconfigured to provide more data on environmental conditions, instead of focusing on military matters.

In an influential *Atlantic Monthly* article entitled "The Coming Anarchy," Robert Kaplan warned about "the withering away of central governments, the rise of tribal and regional domains, the unchecked spread of disease, and the growing pervasiveness of war."[2] He traced these problems back to environmental causes, sounding a clarion call:

[1] See Thomas Homer-Dixon, "On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict," *International Security,* Fall 1991, pp. 76–116.

[2] Robert Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy," *Atlantic Monthly,* Feb. 1994, p. 48.

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> It is time to recognize the "environment" for what it is: *the* national-security issue of the early twenty-first century. The political and strategic impact of surging populations, spreading disease, deforestation and soil erosion, water depletion, air pollution, and, possibly, rising sea levels . . . will be the core foreign policy challenge.[3]

Kaplan's vision of "failed states" amidst environmental collapse seemed compelling to those engaged in analysis of U.S. experience in Somalia or the problems of Haiti or the former Yugoslavia. Warfare, Kaplan wrote, may become indistinguishable from crime, and waged by urban mafias and communal militias rather than state-controlled armies.

When Kaplan then set off on a tour of the "poverty belt" that embraces two-thirds of the human race, supporters and critics alike expected that he would be amassing evidence in support of his *Atlantic Monthly* thesis. Hence the surprise with which *The Ends of the Earth* will be greeted. First, it is a self-described "travel book" rather than a social-scientific survey on the order of Paul Kennedy's *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century*. Secondly, he admits that the news about the environment in North America and Western Europe is good, and he acknowledges that "the environment elsewhere can, over the long run, be replenished" (p. 300). Thirdly, although Kaplan did journey from West Africa to Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, China, India, and Southeast Asia, he is quite honest about his inability to produce, as he had hoped, "the paradigm for understanding the world in the early decades of the twenty-first century" (p. 8). If anything, he found that his travels complicated his views and made him more aware of how foul governments destroy environments (the sections on the former Soviet Central Asia are chilling), as opposed to how ecological crises cause political strife. He thus became "less dogmatic" (p. 9) about the coming anarchy and returned home persuaded that "solutions to specific problems I encountered in my journey will someday arise: population growth, even in West Africa, will flatten out; ingenious ways to restore the soil will be found; and so on" (p. 437). To be sure, he still argues that, in the immediate future, problems loom for a critical mass of humanity. Perhaps so: the scattered evidence from the developing countries suggests that environmental conditions are still deteriorating there. Moreover, wildly uneven growth will continue between the rich and the poor worlds, as well as within the poverty belt, and there is little the rich can do to boost growth in the poor areas. "*We are not in control,*" he concludes with emphasis (p. 436). But the foundations of international life are not likely to be disturbed unless a major regional power somewhere should turn into a gorilla-sized Somalia.

In sum, the condition of the people and ecology in the poverty belt, while heartbreaking, is not so hopeless as Gore and other alarmists would have us believe. Two collections of essays provide reasons for optimism about the environmental issues of most concern to the United States. Ronald Bailey has assembled ten essays that cover systematically the most important issues of the day: population (Nicholas Eberstadt), pesticides (Dennis Avery), global warming

[3] Ibid., p. 38.

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(Robert Balling Jr.), mineral and energy resources (Stephen Moore), environmentally caused cancer (Bruce Ames and Lois Gold), forests (Roger Sedjo), conserving biodiversity (Stephen Edwards), water (Terry Anderson), oceans (Kent Jeffreys), and air quality (Indur Goklany). Together, they are the best single survey of environmental issues this reviewer has seen.

For a more detailed analysis, the collection put together by Julian Simon is invaluable. Simon has assembled fifty-eight essays by leading experts, including eight on natural resources; eight on agriculture, food, land, and water; eleven on pollution and the environment; and six on how to think about environmental issues (e.g., how to evaluate risks), including Simon's excellent introduction and his conclusions about what the future holds. The articles are well designed for the dedicated non-specialist reader in that they present much information in a way that can be readily understood, without mathematical models or intimidating scientific terminology. The Simon collection covers many important topics, but it is by no means systematic. The selections differ considerably in breadth. About half the essays discuss only the U.S. situation, while others analyze global developments. Some survey environmental conditions over the sweep of centuries; others analyze changes in the last ten to twenty years.

The Bailey and Simon books provide detailed information about changes in the U.S. environment (though not as much about global conditions), and the statistics are striking. Sulfur dioxide emissions per capita are down 60 percent from their 1920 peak. Carbon monoxide emissions per capita are down 53 percent since World War II. Particulate emissions are down 70 percent over the same time. Meanwhile, the numbers of many wild animals are rising spectacularly. In the last twenty years, deer and wild turkey populations have more than doubled, while elk and pronghorn sheep numbers are up more than fifty percent. Thirty-four years ago, Rachel Carson warned we would "still the songs of birds and the leaping fish in the streams."[4] Of the forty types of birds she said might now be extinct or nearly so, fourteen have increasing populations, nineteen have stable populations, and seven are declining.

If we turn from the state of the world environment to the state of the human condition, the situation is even better. Simon's collection includes ten essays on life, death, and health, plus fifteen essays on the standard of living, productivity, and poverty. In those countries for which we have data, human welfare increased considerably in recent centuries and during the course of the present century. Problem after problem has become less severe, as Michael Haines shows about disease, Samuel Preston about mortality, Kenneth Hill about childhood mortality, Jean-Claude Chesnais about murder, Allan Brandt about smoking, and James Roberts about alcohol consumption. Living standards are more difficult to measure, but there is broad agreement among the authors that at least in the United States (for which data are available), the standard for every group in society has improved. It would seem that the rich have experienced a greater change than the poor, but, as Robert Rector shows, the poor now

[4] Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), p. 272.

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have larger homes, own more consumer goods (automobiles, telephones, washing machines, and televisions), and eat more food than ever before.

Why the disconnect between environmental pessimism and reality? The media hysteria about environmental issues is the subject of a volume by Aaron Wildavsky, who until his death was a professor of political science and public policy at the University of California at Berkeley. Using evidence collected by his students, he walks the reader through the coverage and then the scientific research on a series of issues that received much media attention: acid rain, PCBs, DDT, Love Canal, dioxin, Agent Orange, hazardous waste sites, arsenic in drinking water, global warming, and ozone depletion. His description of the media coverage is "no runs, no hits, all errors" (p. 185). He explains that the problem is not simply journalists' search for the sensational. Instead, the exaggeration of environmental dangers comes from the approach taken by many journalists and most in the environmental movement, namely, the adoption of worst-case scenarios, defended as acts of prudence. Wildavsky argues that the best way to overcome the hysteria is to promote more science, because, he argues, "the more that is known, the less reason there is to fear the worrisome object and the weaker the rationale for preventive measures" (p. 437).

Some who worry that the world's environment is in imminent danger of collapse imply that nature needs us to protect her. What hubris! Gregg Easterbrook, formerly of *Newsweek* and *The New Republic*, describes masterfully the power of nature. Nature works on a time scale that far surpasses human history; the few millennia since the human species became literate are but a blink of the eye for nature's processes. What to humanity are enormous efforts and great changes are less impressive to nature. Consider how little the land has been affected by an event as far reaching as the settlement of the United States; forests covered 40 percent of the land when the *Mayflower* landed and still cover 30 percent today. The pollution and environmental degradation caused by humanity reduce our enjoyment of nature's bounty, but they do not threaten nature's endurance.

Nature has created much greater variation in environmental conditions than man ever could. Easterbrook is devastating in his critique of the mythology that there is some state of nature that human activity disturbs: "Environmentalism today labors under the Fallacy of Environmental Correctness—that if only left to its own devices, the environment will find some abstractly proper alignment of species and life cycles, one that is right where others are wrong" (p. 90). In fact, human intervention is but one of the many reasons why nature's normal state is change.

Easterbrook would like to think that he has written the definitive statement on the environment that corrects the errors of the extremists. And it would be rewarding if his massive tome lived up to that goal. Unfortunately, he lets his high opinion of himself get in the way. He regards his "ecorealist manifesto" as intuitively obvious, when in fact such purported "natural values" as "cooperation is better than competition" are unsupported by the evidence he presents (p. 139). Furthermore, Easterbrook is intolerant of those who do not embrace his deist moral philosophy. It is hard to take seriously someone

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who expects science could lead to life after death. ("We should hope an afterlife already exists. But if it does not, then people should make one" [p. 675].)

For students of international affairs, the major environmental issue is the one Bailey highlights in his introductory essay, namely, the existence of commons—valuable resources that belong to all and therefore to none. When societies were simpler and populations were smaller, commons were widespread; for instance, land was held as commons in many societies. The obvious problem with commons is that everyone has an incentive to take advantage of what is free, while no one has an incentive to protect it. It is no accident that such resources are among the most stressed by pollution or overuse. Bailey argues, "History shows that the better way to avoid the tragedy of the commons is through privatizing resource ownership" (p. 4). While he may wish that were so, the evidence presented in his volume is mixed: government regulation can at times be an effective, low-cost solution.

Media coverage of environmental issues typically adopts worst-case scenarios.

Disputes have arisen over several thorny global commons issues, such as fishing rights on the high seas. Ian Rowlands analyzes the two most important efforts to date to resolve such disputes, namely, the negotiations over the control of ozone-depleting chemicals (especially chlorofluorocarbons) and gases like carbon dioxide that may cause global warming through the greenhouse effect. Rowlands provides a reasonable account of how agreement was reached on the ozone issue but not reached on global warming. He writes not for the general reader but for the political-science theorist who wants a model that explains when success in international negotiations is more likely. That may make his book more useful for political scientists, but it significantly reduces the work's broader interest. Still, Rowlands does illustrate the general point that when scientific consensus indicates that the global commons is threatened, politicians do respond with international agreements under which each nation pledges to take steps to curtail its pollution. Perhaps that is not as neat a solution as the private-property approach Bailey, like so many economists, would prefer, but it has worked relatively well to date.

The distinguished Yale economist William Nordhaus has also written about the global-warming problem that Rowlands discusses. His volume, explaining his dynamic integrated model of the climate and the economy (the DICE model), is written for the specialist, not the policy community, but it can be readily understood by anyone undeterred by simple mathematical models and basic statistical analysis. The merit of Nordhaus's approach is that it focuses thinking on alternatives and their costs. When the problem is framed that way, rather than as the usual question of how much to cut greenhouse gas emissions, we begin to think more systematically. One interesting result is the revelation that the cost of a doubling of world carbon dioxide emissions—which is at the outer limit of what present trends imply for the long run—would result in a 1.33 percent loss in world output. That is a problem, but not a catastrophe. It is hard to see how the loss of 1.33 percent of output would be sufficient to

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convert environmental issues into *the* national security issue of the early twenty-first century, in Kaplan's phrase.

Part of the reason why the environment is unlikely to become a major security issue is that as consensus develops about problems, society will respond. As Easterbrook explains, "Society heeded [Rachel] Carson's warning [about pesticides], enacted the necessary reforms . . . and realized such a prompt environmental gain that the day of reckoning Carson foresaw never arrived" (pp. 82–83). The evidence to date from international negotiations is similarly encouraging: once consensus emerged that ozone depletion was a serious problem, the world community responded. That experience suggests that the environment will be an issue for diplomatic negotiators, not for those in the national security business.

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La Longue Durée

Having created a stir by publishing David Asher's gloomy assessment of today's Japanese economy, the editors of *Orbis* thought to look back at what their predecessors had published regarding Japan's prospects before that country became synonymous with postwar wealth.

The most interesting article on the subject was a review-essay written by Warren S. Hunsberger, Haloid Professor of International Economics at the University of Rochester, and published by *Orbis* in the spring of 1959.[1]

Hunsberger had been chief of the Japan branch of the Department of State's division of research for the Far East from 1945 to 1948, and chief of that division in 1949 and 1950. For *Orbis,* he was reviewing *Japan's Postwar Economy,* written by Jerome B. Cohen, assistant dean in charge of graduate studies at the Bernard Baruch School of Business and Public Administration, College of the City of New York.

Hunsberger noted that, at the time of his writing: "There is a widespread pessimism about Japan's economic situation and prospects. In this reviewer's opinion, such somber prognosis may in part reflect the incompleteness of communication between Japanese and Western economists. Cohen, in any event, shares this pessimism. Japanese observers are deeply affected by it. Part of the basis for it is an assumption, probably springing from the facts of economic history in the U.S. and other leading industrial countries, that domestic natural resources are, or should be, a decisive element in economic growth and development. In this view, dependence on imports for a large proportion of food and industrial raw materials is a dangerous drawback. . . . [Thus, Cohen] quotes approvingly the statement of Joseph Dodge, that 'The fundamental problem of the Japanese nation can be expressed in the simple terms of too many people and too few natural resources.'"

Hunsberger goes on to say: "Lack of an assured supply of raw materials is the central fact that makes Japan's economy insecure today. But production does not rest on natural resources alone; human resources and capital are no less essential. Japan's modern history has shown her human resources to be of a very high order. Skills have been acquired rapidly. Leadership and discipline have usually been strong. Capital has been created by saving at an extraordinarily high rate. Thus, Japan has two of the three basic factors of production, human resources and capital, in each of which Japan requires a relatively small amount of outside supplements. Shortages are very great in the third factor, natural resources, but these

[1] Warren S. Hunsberger, "Japan's Economy After Recovery from War," *Orbis,* Spring 1959, pp. 104–9.

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can be made up by imports of food and raw materials. . . .

"The crucial question for Japan is how much she can sell abroad in order to be able to pay for imports. Cohen is cautious. After surveying Japan's export problems and markets, he finds room for export expansion in the U.S. and in Southeast Asia, but does not see much future for Japanese goods in communist areas. The overall prospect, as he expresses it, is for Japan to make only 'slow gains in real income and real wages. . . .'

"Are Japan's prospects really so limited? Most Japanese seem to believe so. Despite the rapid recovery from World War II and the large number of trained economists now available, Japan has not yet produced any model or plan for what might be termed full prosperity, involving not only full employment but also reasonably efficient allocation of labor and other resources. . . . A qualification should be entered here, since it is reported that the Economic Planning Agency in Tokyo is now drawing up a projection of the Japanese economy through 1980. Perhaps this projection will raise Japanese sights above the low and unrealistic levels of the past.

"This reviewer wishes to challenge the prevailing pessimistic view of Japan's economic prospects. Japan's productive capabilities can be expected to continue to rise, both quantitatively and qualitatively. With more than 80 per cent of the value of 1957 exports reflecting domestic costs, and less than 20 per cent direct import costs, there is much room for cost-saving improvements, even in goods now exported. Japanese traders, supported by their government, are now undertaking extensive and vigorous export promotion activities. Before we agree with the prevailing gloomy view on Japan's export prospects, it may be well to remind ourselves that never in the past has Japan, on a large scale and over a period as long as a decade, attempted vigorous promotion of manufactured goods exports. The export successes of the 1930s were cut short by the war. Perhaps the world will now have an opportunity to see what Japan can do when her tremendous energies are mobilized to meet the export problem."

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Auguries

Communist Rollback

When the countries of East-Central Europe won their freedom from the USSR in 1989, most Americans expected they would be eager to join the West—ideologically, politically, economically, and strategically. Today, East Europeans do want to join the West strategically—they do not, after all, wish to fall again under the sway of Russia. But ideologically, politically, and especially economically, these same people not only appear to shun Western ways, they are actively returning to the people and practices that governed them prior to 1989.

Consider the Visegrad Three (Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia), the countries expected to lead the westward procession. Through Lech Walesa's Solidarity Movement, Poland triggered East Europe's break with Moscow and was thus the sentimental favorite to be our first Western "recruit." Yet in 1993, Poland elected a leftist majority to parliament, and Jozef Olesky, a member of the pre-1989 Communist Party's Central Committee, became speaker of the parliament's lower house. In March 1995, Olesky became prime minister of Poland. And in November 1995, the former communist Aleksander Kwasniewski, head of Poland's Democratic Left Alliance, won the presidency, briefly sending Walesa back to work on the docks of Gdansk. When Prime Minister Olesky resigned in January 1996, amid charges he had spied for the former Soviet Union, Kwasniewski named another ex-communist, Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz, to replace him as prime minister. Kwasniewski, Cimoszewicz, and the new government's foreign minister—Dariusz Rosati, also an ex-communist—"are known in Poland as the 'Boys From Ordynacka,' a reference to the Warsaw street where the Communist Party's Association of Polish Students had its headquarters."[1]

Hungary, too, had a special place in the hearts of Americans who remembered its courageous 1956 rebellion against Moscow. Yet in the parliamentary elections of 1994, the Hungarian Democratic Forum, which had led Hungary in its transition from communism, was nearly obliterated, retaining only 37 seats out of 386. By contrast, the former communist party (now the Hungarian Socialist Party—HSP) won an outright majority in parliament, 209 of 386 seats. The HSP then went on to ally itself with the center-left Alliance of Free Democrats, which had 70 seats, giving the ruling coalition the two-thirds majority necessary to restructure Hungary's political system. For Hungary's prime minister, the coalition chose Gyula Horn, the last foreign minister under

[1] Jane Perlez, "Poland's New Leaders Are Gazing Intently Westward," *New York Times*, Apr. 6, 1996.

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the old communist regime, and a man who—like most East European leaders of his day—was educated in the Soviet Union. Moreover, Horn "served in a worker's militia that had assisted Soviet troops in suppressing the 1956 liberal uprising," making his accession to Hungary's post-communist premiership the ultimate symbol of communist rollback.[2]

Lastly, Czechoslovakia held a special meaning for Americans, in part because of Alexander Dubcek's 1968 Prague Spring and in part because Czechoslovakia's first post-communist president, Vaclav Havel, was well known in the West for having been a dissident under the communist regime. But Czechoslovakia proper vanished on January 1, 1993, splitting into the Czech Republic under the pro-capitalist Vaclav Klaus, and Slovakia under the pro-socialist Vladimir Meciar. Thereafter, Westerners who spoke of "the Visegrad states" frequently failed to note whether they meant to include Slovakia or exclude it. Most preferred to exclude it.

If the Visegrad states seemed likely to be the first group to join, or rejoin, the West, the Baltic states—which became independent in September 1991, after the failed Moscow coup—seemed likely to be the second. After all, the United States never technically recognized Moscow's sovereignty in those lands, and their vocal diasporas in the West had made the Balts seem the epitome of captive peoples yearning to breathe free.

Yet in Lithuania, largest and most populous of the Baltic states, voters in the 1992 parliamentary elections ousted the Sajudis movement-turned-party that had led the country to freedom. They voted instead for the former communist party (now called the Democratic Labor Party—DLP), giving it an outright majority in parliament, 73 of 141 seats, while Sajudis retained only 30 seats. Presaging the pattern in Poland (to which it has historic ties), Lithuania then went on in 1993 to elect a president from the DLP—Algirdas Brazauskas, who had been first secretary (which is to say, head) of the Lithuanian Communist Party when the country was still a Soviet republic. Because of Lithuania's agricultural woes, Brazauskas picked as his prime minister Adolfas Slezevicius, former deputy chief of the agricultural section of the Lithuanian Communist Party.

The next major test for socialist enlargement will come in Russia itself, where Gennardi Zyuganov is the presidential candidate of an unabashedly Communist Party. If Zyuganov wins, he will command considerable resources with which to "engage" like-minded politicians in East Europe and thus further "enlarge" the socialist sphere. His success in that venture is likely to be inversely proportional to the degree that East Europeans fear and resist it. And that, ironically, means socialist enlargement in the region will likely have greater success if the West provides East Europeans with strong security guarantees regardless of their voting habits.

[2] *Facts on File*, Mar. 10, 1994, p. 165.

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